F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Crack-Up*; Saul Bellow: Fiction and Fakery

At the Top with Bill Walton • A Guide to Tipping

Esquire

FEBRUARY 1982 · PRICE $2.00

Man At His Best

The New Boys on the Hill

Washington's Neoliberals: Smart and tough, but can they lead?



Left to right:
Representative Timothy Wirth (Colorado),
Senator Gary Hart (Colorado),
Senator Bill Bradley (New Jersey)

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SOMETHING OLD AND SOMETHING NEW



YOU WILL find two new features in this month's Esquire. Vintage Esquire, which will appear intermittently, and Man at His Best, a special section that will appear monthly. Vintage Esquire is just that: a prized selection from a past issue of the magazine. The commitment to do this feature came out of our initial discussions of ways to celebrate Esquire's fiftieth year of publication in 1983. We decided we wanted to share with you some of Esquire's extraordinary articles of the past, some that have been landmarks in journalism and in short-story writing. The first selection is F. Scott Fitzgerald's classic "The Crack-Up" (page 74), vintage 1936. It will be followed by other literary and journalistic treasures, and by the time of our fiftieth anniversary, Esquire readers will have received not only an important anthology of the best of our past but also what we hope will be a number of future classics as well.

Man at His Best (page 23) was conceived to provide readers with useful information in a concise form. The section is subdivided into categories such as food, clothing, travel, and collecting, and we intend it to be a reader's resource for finding quality in everyday life. Thus, the subsection First-Rate honors true quality products. The Enlightened Traveler offers information on self-improvement and learning vacations; Special Places, on other travel alternatives. Smart Money is for those who wish to invest in things that provide more than financial advantages. What Every Man Should Know concentrates on the social graces.

THIS MONTH'S cover story, a political documentary ("The Neoliberal Club," page 37), had its beginnings some two years ago when its author, Randall Rothenberg, discovered a common trend of thought among young Democrats in Washington while writing a profile of Bill Bradley. Rothenberg was startled to find the liberal senator's talk peppered with such phrases as "pragmatic politics" and "better defense economics," terms that were also turning up in liberal journals such as *The New Republic*. Since then, Rothenberg has watched this new vocabulary, and the new values behind it, emerge as the common link among the younger Democrats in Washington. This new club in Democratic circles, Rothenberg says, represents the fulfillment of an inevitable generational political cycle—one that began in the practical solutions to the problems of the Depression and then wandered into increasing unreality during the Great Society years, only to return once again to its real-world base. At a dinner in Washington a few months ago, Esquire was host to several neoliberals, who, while they advocated different, often contradictory values and political programs, were bound together by their common economic views. We believe these young neoliberals will be a force in the 1980s, and since there is already a conflict between them and the old Democratic club, readers should find this article timely and important.

THE SUBJECT of our In Quotes feature this month is the very quotable Saul Bellow, interviewed by William Kennedy (page 48). Kennedy, an established novelist himself, spent time last summer at Bellow's Vermont home and joined the Bellows and their friends the Bernard Malamuds for dinner one night. In the parking lot of the restaurant, Kennedy reports, Bellow gave Malamud a manuscript copy of his latest novel, *The Dean's December*. Noting the weight of the manuscript, Malamud told Bellow he would need time to read it. Bellow said, "That's okay. As Mae West said, 'I like a man who takes his time.'" Kennedy's own latest novel, *Ironweed*, will be published this fall.

ALSO IN this issue is a Sporting Life piece on Bill Walton, by Roberta Smoodin, which is both a fan's memorial to the golden age of UCLA basketball and an update on the talented and troubled athlete himself ("The Hoop Demon," page 68). Smoodin last appeared in Esquire with a short story, "The Death of Vigo" (April 1981), and prior to that with a feature entitled "What Do Single Women Really Talk About?" (November 1980).

ANYONE WHO loves fishing should know about *The Ultimate Fishing Book*, coedited by Esquire contributing editor Lee Eisenberg and DeCourcy Taylor, and published last November by Houghton Mifflin. Its 256 pages are filled with pictures and excellent essays among the contributors is Esquire's Outdoors columnist, Geoffrey Norman.

OUR FASHION pages this month take you on a behind-the-scenes preview of six major European designers' spring collections ("Direct from Europe," page 82). Fashion editor Vincent Boucher, accompanied by photographer Ken Probst, visited designer ateliers in Milan and Paris to seek out the latest fashion trends from across the Atlantic.

FINALLY, WE are proud to publish Richard Ford's fine short story "Rock Springs" (page 88) and the marvelous paintings of science-fiction artist Chris Foss ("Fantasy Cities," page 58). We think it's an issue full of great things, and we hope you enjoy it. —Phillip Moffitt

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THE SOUND AND THE FURY

FAITHFUL FANS

IN THE last twelve years I have spent more hours than I care to admit with the words of Kris Kristofferson. When someone you don't know has helped you "make it through the night" many times, and has the ability to write the story of your life and set it to music, well, you tend to think you might know him just a bit. I have read more than my share of Kris Kristofferson articles, finding most of them not only vague but extremely vapid. They never quite reach the core of a complex man. But Laura Cunningham's article ("The Very Long Nights of Kris Kristofferson," November) was awe-inspiring. She caught what I have always believed and certainly hoped was there: a truly sensitive man who's just as scared as the rest of us, who doesn't exploit what he has or could have, who maintains his individuality in a slightly hedonistic Malibu environment.

Gloria Alonda
Del Mar, Calif.

JUST RECEIVED your November issue, and what a pleasure it was. I have been reading Esquire for some six years and have been a fan of it through thick and thin (as with the Yankees). I have watched good layouts give way to not-so-good ones, and then back again. I have seen editors come and go, and have watched insightful articles sometimes give way to boring ones. Still, I have stuck by you guys. This issue was the first one in a long time that felt like the good old Esquire of days gone by.

I enjoyed and savored just about every piece, especially Laura Cunningham's one on Kris Kristofferson. Cunningham's article proved you can still offer insightful, in-depth, creative personality pieces. Thanks for some pleasurable reading.

Meredith Brown
New York, N.Y.

THE PROBLEM WITH ISRAEL

I ENJOYED Bernard Lefkowitz's article ("Making It in the Promised Land," November) very much, but excellent as it was, I think he missed the point. The problem with Israel and Israelis is not that they want to have an American standard of living—nothing much wrong with that in my humble opinion—but that they want this paid for by America and Americans. So far they seem to have succeeded beyond their wildest dreams.

Shortly before I left Israel after ten years there, *The Jerusalem Post* published the results of a survey made by Israel's own Institute of Productivity concerning the work habits of nine democracies and their output. Of the nine, Israel was comfortably last. The Israeli employee (hardly deserving to be called a worker) heroically and successfully strives to establish year after year a new world record in lost working hours due to strikes and absenteeism. All this under the approving and benevolent eyes of the Histadrut (labor union), which categorically forbids any employee to be fired or laid off for any reason except for proven and willful sabotage, proven theft, or gross physical abuse of a superior. Name-calling does not count. Nor does any degree of incompetence, absenteeism, or chutzpah—all these sort of come with the territory once an employee has tenure, which comes almost automatically after six to twelve months of faithful goofing off.

As for Mr. Sammy Sharon: If he's seriously thinking of turning all this around, I wish him a big mazel tov. He will need it.

Erwin Fuchs
(Location withheld by request)

AN UNDERSTANDING WOMAN

PLEASE SIR, I beg of you, introduce me to Susan Shapiro ("Why I Like Men," November). As a single male who has loved and lost countless times, I'm certain she's the only woman who understands me!

Daniel J. Haley
Idaho Falls, Idaho

IN AN otherwise spot-on article, Susan Shapiro made one statement that cannot pass unchallenged. "I like men in spite of the fact that every assassination of a great leader was committed by one of their kind." According to my copy of *Watch Your Language*, by Theodore M. Bernstein, assassins need only try to assassinate to win their designation as such. Squeaky Fromme and Sara Jane Moore came to mind quickly. A little investigation led to these: Cicero was killed by Marc Antony's troops but had his tongue cut out by Antony's wife. Charlotte Corday did in Jean-Paul Marat. Czar Alexander II of Russia was bombed by a group led by Sophia Perovskaya. All would object if they knew their existence had been denied. I like women because their memories are selective. But even more than that, I like women because they like men.

Michael Gross
New York, N.Y.

OUTDOORS WITH WATT

KUDOS TO Geoffrey Norman for his "Watt's Folly" (Outdoors, November). While the Outdoors column is, month after month, the Esquire feature I first peruse, this particular piece sharply hit home.

Were it not for an uncle with a keen understanding of and respect for nature, it would be easy for me to side with Watt and his loyal band of Kampgrounds of America (KOA) campers to whom half an acre of dead brown grass constitutes the wilderness. Many of these people are lifelong city dwellers who see no reason to treat our natural wonders any differently from the cities from which they migrate on summer weekends. Yet, having learned that the outdoors is not merely a place to drink and dispose of beer cans, I find it nauseating to see such behavior.

May Watt forever sit in his Winnebago sipping 7-Eleven coffee from a plastic cup, viewing the beauty of the toilets only ten yards away at the cow pasture that is the epitome of nature—the KOA. Some really do appreciate the wild.

David J. Bressler
Forest Park, Ill.

JOURNAL KEEPERS

THE YEAR I was seventeen was 1974, just one decade after Bob Greene's marvelously immortalized year ("1964," American Beat, November). I find in his diary the memories of my own journal. At twenty-one, however, I was terribly concerned with being macho and destroyed my then-incriminating, too-open record. Now, at the less-concerned-with-what-others-think-about-me age of twenty-five, I long to read again the pages that would carry me back to my carefree, chaotic past self. Hats off to Bob Greene.

Dale Youngs
College Station, Tex.

Letters to the editor should be mailed with your address and phone number to: The Sound and the Fury, Esquire, 2 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



BY BOB GREENE

VOICES IN THE NIGHT

She haunts the airwaves, and her listeners. One of them haunts her back



PHOTOGRAPH: MATTHEW MESREKHOFF

ON THE night she finally knew she was in trouble, Alix Lacy was near the end of her shift. It was almost two A.M., she had been on the air for four hours. As usual, she was alone in the studios of KBCO-FM, in Boulder, Colorado. She worked without an engineer; there was no one else in the building.

The light on her telephone was blinking again, like the phones in most sound studios, hers was wired to flash a light rather than to ring. She knew it was him. By this time, she thought she could feel it when he called.

She spoke into the microphone. In her soft, unthreatening voice—perfect for Boulder—she announced the next record. For all the listeners who were waiting, she put an album on one of the two studio turntables. The music played, and the telephone light kept blinking, and with the microphone turned off she started to sob.

IT IS a phenomenon of American late-night radio: the female voice wafting over the airwaves, comforting and stirring at the same time, offering a promise of companionship for listeners who are lonelier than they might want to admit. For women disc jockeys with the right kind of voice, the night shift offers professional opportunity; men want to hear women play them music when it is dark outside, and station managers all across the United States are aware of this.

Alix Lacy is one of the women who sought a career doing this kind of work. Lacy, twenty-seven, worked the ten P.M.–two A.M. shift at KBCO. Her voice was not overtly sexual; in the words of one of her bosses, she came across on the air "like the typical Boulder lady—beautiful, yet simple and wholesome."

Ray Skibitsky, who is the KBCO station manager, said, "I think some listeners have a fantasy in the back of their minds that the female late-night disc jockey is sitting there talking to them, and them alone."

There are no surveys that measure that type of attitude. But one thing Skibitsky and Dennis Constantine, KBCO's program director, were sure of: when they walked the streets of their town and stopped in at bars and restaurants, people would find out what they did for a living, and one of the first questions was always, "What does Alix Lacy look like?"

WHEN THE calls started, Alix Lacy barely noticed them. As a matter of routine, she gave out the station's telephone number during her show. The purpose was to allow listeners to call with requests.

At some point—she does not remember precisely when—she realized that someone was calling and hanging up on her, and that a pattern was beginning to emerge. Right when she would start her shift, the phone would blink, she would answer it—and the caller would hang up. This would occur several times. Nothing would happen until the middle of her shift. Then the caller would do it again, a flurry of calls. Things would get quiet. Then, near the end of the shift, another flurry. She would answer, the caller would hang up.

The KBCO studio is in an office complex that is deserted at night. Alix Lacy worked alone in a room on the second floor, up a flight of stairs. The only entrance or exit for her was the glass door at the top of the stairs. As the hang-up calls continued, night after night, she found herself, for the first time, thinking about that.

One night, after her shift, she left a note on the bulletin board: HEY, EVERYBODY, IS ANYONE ELSE GETTING HANG-UP CALLS A LOT? She asked the other on-air performers to initial the note if they were receiving similar harassment. No one else was.

The caller never said anything. Lacy told herself that "he'll burn out pretty soon. At least he'll say something." She realized she had already decided the caller was a man.

Station employees went on vacation, and Lacy was shifted to fill in for some of them. One week she was on the air from six A.M. until ten A.M. Just after six, the phone flashed. She answered it. The caller hung up. Then again in the middle of the shift. Then just before ten. Another week she was assigned to the two P.M.–SIX P.M. shift. The caller did it again.

She felt something funny happening inside of her. The caller was beginning to become a person to her—a man—and she was frightened of him. She asked her superiors to authorize a phone trace on the calls, which they did; but the telephone company said that, because of technical limitations, they were unable to isolate the calls.

Against her will, she began to feel her stomach knot every time she arrived at the studio for her show. The caller had never threatened her, had never said a word. Yet he was reaching her. She began to refuse to answer the phone during the first hour of her shift. She would see the phone blink, and she would know it was the caller, and she would not pick it up. She would talk on the air and play the records, and all the time she would be looking at the light on the phone. Finally, she would make herself pick it up. Then the caller would hang up. Sometimes the caller would let the phone ring for an hour and a half before she picked it up, when he heard her voice, he would replace the receiver.

There were other callers, too, of course. KBCO listeners who wanted her to play records for them. When she looked at the lights blinking, she thought she could tell which callers were normal, and which was the one. "I kind of know what his calls feel like," she said. She realized that such a thing sounded absurd. "I know that something like this can run away with you, but once it's happening, knowing that doesn't help." She had become obsessed with the blinking light. "Every time it blinks it's like a knife going into me again and again."

HER BOSSES knew that something was wrong. "I listened to her tapes, and it was clear that she was distracted," said Dennis Constantine. "It's fairly easy to tell when a disc jockey isn't paying attention to what she is doing."

To Alix Lacy's great consternation, the presence of the caller was taking over the hours she spent at the studio. "I feel as if he is trying to touch me," she said. "He's not touching me by saying anything; he's touching me by getting me to react to his consistency." Ray Skibitsky told her that by refusing to answer the phone when she thought it was the caller, she was only encouraging him; she was verifying to him that he was getting to her. She knew this was true, still, when she felt it was the caller on the other end, she could not pick up the receiver. She could only stare at the light and try to get through her show.

Her conviction grew stronger. She was fearful that the caller was going to come to the studio with a gun, shoot his way through the door, and come up the stairs to where she sat before the microphone. One afternoon she called Peter Rodman, a KBCO host and Boulder journalist. She told him about her fear about the gun; Rodman said, "Alix, the door is glass. If anyone wants to do anything, all he has to do is kick the door in. Why are you thinking about a gun?" Rodman's talk persuaded her to ask the station management to have a man answer her phone for one night, maybe if the caller heard a man's voice, he would stop.

Ray Skibitsky agreed to do it. He came to work with Lacy one evening, when the phone began to blink, he picked it up. Whoever was on the other end hung up. He sat with Lacy throughout her shift. Near the end, the caller hesitated before hanging up. The caller let out an exasperated sigh. It was definitely the sigh of a male. Then the line went dead.

The next two nights, he did not call. Alix Lacy was ecstatic. She thought she had been silly in the extreme for worrying about it. At the end of the week she worked an earlier shift than usual and her voice on KBCO was replaced that night by fellow disc jockey Rick Lofgren. Lofgren worked his shift. When he finished and walked out to his car in the parking lot, one tire had been slashed and all the air let out of another.

BOTH LACY and her bosses knew they had a problem. It was not so much a horror story as something even more disturbing: the idea that someone with access to a medium of mass communication could become mentally trapped by one person in the audience with a will to disrupt her life. When Lacy had gone into radio work, she had liked the idea that, sitting behind a microphone in an isolated room, she could reach thousands upon thousands of strangers. Now one of the strangers was reaching her.

"I sensed there was a guy out there doing this," Ray Skibitsky said. "But what was there to do? He obviously gets his gratification and his kicks by doing this to her. But there have been no overt threats. When you look at it objectively, it's just an annoyance. If she could just ignore it, she would see that. But she can't."

When Lacy arrived at work one day, there was a letter addressed to her from Bob Greenlee, the owner of the station.

"I am not unaware of your concern over the belief you are being harassed by a telephone caller," the letter began. "Ray mentioned that he came in this week to answer the phones while you were here and he too senses that there may be someone on the phone who, for whatever reason, gets off on having you answer the phone and then hang up.

"As you know, we have little control over sick minds who would do this to someone. Try as we might, it is impossible for us to do anything to trace or catch up with the person calling you. And even though you are upset by having to put up with this situation, I believe it is a continuing disruption of your work at this station and must now step into the matter. I have authorized Dennis Constantine to find a person to answer the phone for you during your shift for the next week. If, at the end of that time, you cannot pull yourself together and live in peace with yourself, the situation is not correctable by any further actions from us. I will need to address the matter of finding another person to do your work.... You are an excellent employee, we all like you very much, and hope you can find the inner strength it will require to get over the fear you have."

ALIX LACY decided to take a vacation. As of this writing, that is where she was.

She was sick at heart. She knew that when she returned to work, the caller would be waiting for her; and she knew she could not continue to live her life thinking about him. To her, the only logical solution seemed to be to leave Boulder, or to get out of radio work. It almost made her shake to think about it, the best thing about the vacation was that she did not have to see the phone blink at her every night. She had talked to Constantine and Skibitsky about a possible leave of absence, but she knew that was only delaying her final decision.

She had gotten some jobs around Boulder playing records at parties, it was a big step down from talking to the listeners of KBCO, but at least she could see her audience. She was also studying jazz piano; something was telling her that she had to come up with an alternative way to make a living.

"My voice...," she said. "I've always had a voice that people commented on. I just think it's a pleasant and conversational voice. I've never felt it necessary to project my sexuality through my voice. The last thing I ever wanted to do was provoke someone with it.

"I know that if I don't quit, I'm going to get fired. It's funny, isn't it. I know how foolish all of this sounds, and I know that everyone thinks I should just ignore it. I feel like a fool for letting it get to me."

But it has. All over America, there are voices being sent out into the night; all the voices entering all the bedrooms and automobiles and bars. Implicit in the voices is a sense of power; the power to reach people, to touch their minds and change them, if only in small ways. Seldom do you hear about someone touching the voices back.

"There is this movie, *Forbidden Planet*," Lacy said. "It's about this invisible monster that attacks a spaceship. They try to find the monster, but it turns out that there's really nothing there. See, the monster was the subconscious mind of the scientist himself. I've been thinking about that a lot. Why am I creating this invisible monster in my life? And then I realize how far it's gone. I'm even questioning myself."

One thing bothers Lacy most of all, she said. It is a belief she holds—a belief that goes beyond all the rationalizing and all the intellectual understanding of what has happened.

"I'm not afraid, but I know I will meet him someday," she said. "I know how that sounds, but I've thought about it and I know it's true and there's nothing I can do about it. He's created this thing between us, and he's out there, and someday we'll meet."

BOB GREENE is a contributing editor of Esquire magazine.

BY ADAM SMITH

DR. DEATH WILL SEE YOU NOW

For him, nuclear devastation is just a subject of rational analysis

I KNOW of three people called "Dr. Death."

The first is Skip Thomas the former Raider defensive back, and his name was quite probably invented by his fellow players. The second is Albert Wohlower, a very smart economist at the First Boston Corporation, who got his nickname because he kept predicting higher interest rates, which cast a pall over both stock and bond markets. The third is a political scientist, a friend of mine who got his nickname from his specialty, arms control and arms parity. "Death and destruction" is as common a phrase in his papers as "dollars and cents" is in an accountant's. This Dr. Death, for example, is very much part of the debate on how we should meet the buildup of Soviet missile power and what that buildup means. "The major military effect of the Soviet buildup to date," he wrote in an article, "has been to increase greatly the amount of death and destruction the Soviet Union could produce in the United States, by either a first or a second strike, without significantly affecting the amount of death and destruction the United States could produce in the Soviet Union." Now that is, in a way, good news, because Dr. Death was saying that even though the Soviet Union has built up its missiles tremendously, the buildup hasn't affected our own ability to visit "death and destruction" on the Soviet Union. But it was the casual use of the phrase "death and destruction" that caught my eye. I guess if death and destruction is your everyday business, the prospect of it is no worse than blood is to a surgeon.



ILLUSTRATION • LIZ PYLE

The next items that caught my attention were the desk aids available to those in the death-and-destruction trade. (I am aware that this science could be labeled the "peace" trade—just as the Strategic Air Command uses the motto. Peace is our profession.) The desk aids help you to quantify death and destruction. Dr. Death gave the highest rating to the Missile Effectiveness and CEP (Circular Error Probable) Calculator, made by the Electronic Systems Division of General Electric. CEP is a number corresponding to the radius of the circle within which your missile has a fifty-fifty chance of falling. Enthusiasts of the cruise missile believe, for example, that it will have a ninety-foot CEP, which is uncannily accurate. Two favorite desk aids from the RAND Corporation are the Bomb Damage Effect Computer and the Damage Probability Computer for Point Targets with *P* and *Q* Vulnerability Numbers. From Boeing, in Seattle, comes the Vulnerability Assessment Calculator. From TRW comes the ICBM System Effectiveness and Survivability Slide Rule. The TRW calculator carries a bit of promotional advertising: "Multiple Aim Point Basing Promotes Stability." I guess if you're in the trade, that slogan is no different from Dristan fighting colds twelve ways, or whatever.

What these calculators produce are equations and numbers. Some of the numbers are quite large and not easily translatable into flesh, bone, and blood. Dr. Death's thesis that the United States has retained its second-strike capability translates this way, originally, back in 1964, the Soviets could have inflicted about 30 million deaths on us in an all-out nuclear war, and now they have increased that capability to 100 million to 120 million, whereas our second-strike death-and-destruction capability has remained at 100 million to 120 million—that is, 120 million dead.

One difficulty for the casual visitor to this world is that the acronyms are pronounced before the visitor is quite sure what they mean. There was, for example, much enthusiasm for what sounded like "Shickems" and "Alchems." "Shickem" suggests a rubber raincoat, and "Alchem," the ancient process of turning lead into gold. Actually, "Shickem" and "Alchem" are the same cruise missile, but the SLCM (Sea-Launched Cruise Missile) would ride on a submarine or a surface ship and ALCM (Air-Launched Cruise Missile) would be slung under a B-52. Both Shickem and Alchem have TERCOM (Terrain Contour Mapping) to find its way. the buzz bomb scans the surface as it tools along, recognizes the terrain, and matches it against the pictures in its computer. And the buzz bomb has that wonderful ninety-foot Circular Error Probable. Those in favor of the cruise missile also point to its relatively low cost and to its "high survivability." Because the cruise missile flies at extremely low altitudes, its proponents claim that it cannot easily be detected by enemy radar, and because it is so small, it is supposed to be difficult to shoot down. Opponents, on the other hand, say that the deployment of the cruise missile will make the monitoring of arms-control agreements more difficult, since cruise missiles can be outfitted with

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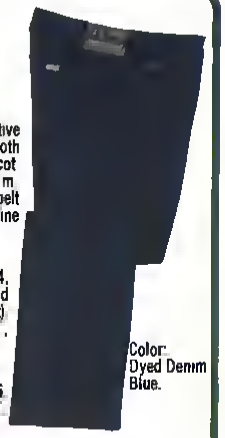
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WHAT DISTURBS AMERICAN POLICY MAKERS IS NOT THAT THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE WOULD GET CHARRED IN A MISSILE EXCHANGE.... IT'S THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT WIN WITHOUT EVEN FIGHTING A NUCLEAR WAR.

either conventional or nuclear warheads. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union would then be able to verify which kind of warhead was loaded into the other's cruise missile.

Proponents point out that cruise missiles will add warheads to inventory, which is good, except that you can't just match numbers against numbers. "The strategic debate," warned political scientist Warner Schilling, "has focused on numbers of missiles and warheads as if they were living creatures whose survival was of value in their own right—[instead of] potential differences in the war outcomes among which statesmen might actually be able to discriminate in terms of values about which they do care."

So the Russians have caught up with us in sheer numbers. Was there anything we could have done about that? Well, if we had pushed for the building of even more warheads and more missiles and if our 1964 ratio had been maintained, we would now have 12,000 "delivery vehicles" and 50,400 warheads, instead of 2,058 vehicles and 9,200 warheads. What we have now are options flexible enough to take out 100 million to 120 million people—death and destruction—on a second strike, so the extra 41,200 warheads might have been a bit redundant. And then we negotiated the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. I wanted to know how we would know whether the Russians were cheating. I remember when the spy satellite photography got so good it was said to bring pictures home of the olive in Khrushchev's martini. Now it's even better.

What else could we have done? We had two other choices as the Russians built up. Should we have MIRVed our missiles? MIRVing makes them multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles and gives you many warheads where before there was one. We MIRVed the ICBMs in 1970 and the SLBMs (Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles) in 1971. The Russians MIRVed their ICBMs in 1975 and their SLBMs in 1978. Neither side has tried to ban or limit the MIRVs.

The other choice we had was to increase our defense. Make the Russians use more missiles to knock us out. We decided against that for several reasons. First, it could only lead to an arms race without any positive military gain. Second, the technology of the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) seemed a bit shaky. And third, as for civil defense, fallout shelters, and all that, the public wasn't having it. The public doesn't like to be reminded of death. The first ten years of the Soviet buildup coincided with the Vietnam War, and the public didn't like Vietnam. Vietnam was inflation and disruption enough, without the addition of an ABM.

What disturbs American policy makers is not necessarily that the Northern Hemisphere would get charred in a missile exchange. Not much you can do about that. What disturbs them is the vision of the Soviets counting up warheads and getting bold. We have substituted nuclear strength for conventional arms vis-à-vis the Soviets, and now the Soviets are at parity. Maybe the Soviets would blackmail our allies, if not us, and, what's worse, the allies just might cave in, so the Soviets would win without even fighting a nuclear war.

When the policy makers look at Europe these days, that continent looks as if it has just arrived in the late Sixties. The long-hairs are now marching in France and Belgium and Germany and Britain, chanting "nukes out." Somehow the Americans have been made the bad guys, wanting to fight to the last European, whereas the original point of having Americans there was to ensure that we were in it with the Europeans if they were attacked.

The Europeans seem more relaxed about the Russians than Messrs. Reagan, Weinberger, and Haig. The German economics minister, Otto Lambsdorff, came to Washington, D.C., and we asked him about the pipeline, which is a big issue in Germany. The pipeline will bring natural gas from Siberia to energy-short Germany and four other West European countries, the Russians supply the gas, and Mannesmann AG in Düsseldorf gets to make the pipe, which is good for business in Düsseldorf. To me it seemed like a long way to go for gas, with the North Sea gas so close at hand, but maybe the British and the Norwegians weren't going to trade North Sea gas for a pipe from Essen. It didn't sound like the Russian Army was leaving for the Channel in the morning or the generals were about to launch their own Stickems. On the other hand, for sure, there were some of the Russians' own folks mixed in with all those naive Social Democrats marching along the streets of Europe.

IF THE tone of this column seems light for so heavy a matter, that is deliberate, if defensive. I find this whole business appalling. I know perfectly well the Russians are up to mischief in many corners of the globe. But the equations—from those desk aids that tell you how many megadeaths with what variables—deal only in cold numbers, not in real lives, real people with noses and ears and cavities in their teeth. Even Russians get cavities. I think it is with some other kind of *perception* that the breakthrough must come, not merely the piling up of more warheads and more sophisticated systems. An alarming article in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, one of the political-science journals tracking this field, asked: Do arms races escalate to all-out war? The statistics show they do. "The findings support with hard evidence the intuitive fears of those who argue that an intensification of the superpower arms competition could lead to... a major confrontation ... likely to result in ... all-out war."

I also found some encouragement in the same publication as I was reading up on this field. In 1977, the Israelis perceived all Arabs as unwavering in their wish to annihilate the Zionist state, and with good reason, they had had four wars in a generation. Sadat said that if the Israelis did not come to the Geneva Peace Conference with the PLO, there would be war. General Peled of the Israeli Air Force said Israel would destroy the Egyptian and Syrian armies in the next war. And then Sadat turned it around with a sentence: "I am ready to go to their house, to the Knesset itself and to talk to them." And when he did go, he changed the *perceptions* of both Egyptians and Israelis, within a month. one hundred thousand Israelis sang for peace in a public square. The Egyptians and the Israelis are not home free yet, but at least the perceptions have changed.

Kenneth Boulding, the distinguished economist, wrote that in the Great Depression, economists wrote about unemployment as if it were a bad hailstorm, then the Keynesian revolution gave some hope that nations could do something about the "economic blizzards" that had previously been considered as random as the weather. Right now we consider peace and war like the weather, something to be fatalistically endured. What, Boulding asked, could the elements of peace be? Should we study the taboos that inhibit primitive tribes? Or what? We study so much war, but "no government at the moment has anything remotely resembling a policy for peace. All of them have a policy of defense, but that is something quite different. If the peace research community [could inquire] as to what a policy for peace would look like, even on the part of a single government, we might be able to lift ourselves out of this slough of sterility and impotence into which we seem to have fallen."

ADAM SMITH is the author of The Money Game, Supermoney, Powers of Mind, *and* Paper Money.

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SPORTS CLINIC

BY MORTEN LUND

THE STEADY SKIER

Breaking the balance barrier—a lesson in mind over matter



ILLUSTRATION • HOWK DILAKIAN

AS EVERY beginner has discovered, skis have a mind of their own, an irrational mind that allows them to lurch, tilt, roll, and dive at whim. That makes for a formidable equilibrium problem for skiers compared with other sportsmen, they fall down a lot.

The irony is that the basic act of skiing is easy. Much more so than tennis, for instance, in which the ball, the racket, your opponent, and you are all in motion, even on the first day of play in skiing, your first day is spent on a smooth, gradual slope—you and your skis are the only things moving. It takes only a few hours for a competent instructor to teach a "never-never" (never before on skis) to negotiate the novice slope successfully. Low speeds, low balance requirements—the first day on the mountain is often a real high.

But now increase the angle of the slope and sprinkle it with bumps—the balance requirements escalate proportionately. Without perfect control, your speed accelerates virtually at a free-fall rate. Centrifugal force complicates the matter—lean in against it a hair too much and over you go, lean in too little and over you go again. On an expert slope, your speed can run forty miles an hour. Each little bump is felt; the expert rides a rocky series of jolts, shoves, upthrusts, drops, and hits, skiing from recovery to recovery.

But most skiers never even make it to the expert slope. At some point, almost everyone meets his "balance barrier," the point at which the terrain defeats his equilibrium. Skiers unable to break through this barrier form a significant class of "lifetime intermediates." They remain there no matter how many lessons they take because their instructors, by and large, have followed the notion that if one clings grimly enough to a particular stance on skis he can "learn" balance. "Keep your head *up*, your knees *bent*, your back *straight*, and lean *forward*" is the familiar call, but if that worked, we all would have broken the balance barrier a long time ago. Unfortunately, instructors haven't had the choice of an alternative approach.

Part of the problem has been that the research on balance has been only marginally helpful. A basic study of anatomy tells us that the cerebellum, the "little brain," coordinates the balance signals our body sends us. The signals come primarily from two hollow structures of the inner ear, the semicircular canals and the vestibule, inside of which are fine hairlike cells that sway and bend with the body's change of position and excite the requisite nerve signals. If you damage your inner ear, your equilibrium goes out of whack immediately but not necessarily forever, because balance depends on other things besides your ear. There are other structures whose balance signals may compensate, notably those called proprioceptors, self-perceptive organs strewn about in the muscles, tendons, and joints. The receptors send to the cerebellum crucial signals indicating where they are in relation to the rest of the body, how much pressure they are under, and in which direction they are moving.

The cerebellum is awash in all these signals; evidently what it does is *evaluate* the messages—asks if your body is destabilizing or stabilizing—and then corrects the imbalance by sending signals to trigger motion toward balance. It's a constant process: the cerebellum is always saying in effect "You went too far, now go back." Motion continues toward balance until the correction becomes an *over*correction, is detected as destabilizing, and is corrected again. Balance thus, paradoxically, requires motion. "Even so-called 'static standing,'" conclude Rasch and Burke in their seminal *Kinesiology and Applied Anatomy*, "has been found to be impossible; there is always a swaying which gives evidence of ... unremitting adjustments and counter adjustments of position in order to maintain balance."

The "expert" skier, in this view, is one who most quickly senses, evaluates, and counters destabilizing motion. He can handle the relatively larger destabilizing forces of steep-slope skiing because he senses imbalance *sooner* and makes constant, small, imperceptible corrections to keep himself steady.

This is what kinesiology tells us, but having gotten this far, it has failed to develop further theory that might be of practical help to a skier or to an instructor teaching balance. The question is how one *teaches* speedy correction. You want strong muscles? There are weights for that. You want flexibility? There are plenty of stretching exercises. You want balance? Proceeding from the conventional theories, all an instructor could do until recently was teach the right technical maneuvers and hope that the skier's sense of balance would grow accordingly.

BAD SKIERS ARE FREQUENTLY *OVER*TENSE. WHAT THEY NEED IS NOT THE "RIGHT STANCE," BECAUSE YOU CAN HAVE THE RIGHT STANCE AND STILL BE STIFF, BUT "SOFTER" MUSCLES.

Ironically, the real ground for balance training was broken not by the physiologists but by the 'sports gurus" of the mid-Seventies humanistic movement, proceeding by revelation rather than by scientific method. Led by Tim Gallwey (author of *Inner Tennis, Inner Skiing*, and, last year, *The Inner Game of Golf*), instructors managed to translate humanistic theory into practical ski exercises, including—for the first time—exercises specifically designed for balance on skis. The relevant humanistic principle turned out to be 'body awareness," a simple enough notion that, in its most basic form, has to do with the acute sensing of pressures and muscle tensions in the body. The theory was that heightened awareness corrects and improves your ability to function in the environment—a vague notion, perhaps, but with a translation to skiing that was, and is, spectacular.

Much of it has to do with recognizing the obvious: once aware of the magnitude of his muscle tension, the skier is less tense and more flexible on the snow. When an expert skier hits a sizable bump, he lets the mogul push his skis up under him before dropping them again on the far side. He takes the bump like a car with supershocks. "Soft" muscles are necessary for fast corrective moves: if your leg is cramped, your muscles can't respond quickly to corrective signals from the cerebellum. Of course, nobody can function without some muscle tension, but the reason many skiers don't ski well is that they are frequently *over*tense. They ski not only stiff legged but with virtual cramps. What they need is not the "right stance," because one can have the right stance and still be stiff, but softer muscles.

The key, then, to solving the problem, we are learning, is to concentrate on ridding yourself of that muscle overtension, tension that is brought on, in fact, by much of the classical "stance instruction." There are a number of tension-awareness exercises that work toward that end. Probably the most effective is this 'tightening" exercise: stand still on your skis and systematically tense all your major muscles as hard as you can, then push off and make as many turns as you can while holding that tension. Most skiers have to quit after three turns, yet their sensitivity to muscle tension is so heightened that in no time at all they are skiing more relaxed. Last season, I had a student so bound up that he skied—and fell—as if he were a piece of granite. A couple of sessions with the tightening exercise and he managed to transform himself into something more humanly plastic.

We used to ask questions like "How much do I bend my knees?" These new tension-awareness principles make it clear that there are *better* questions. How relaxed are your legs? Can they bend when you hit bumps? And shake loosely over ruts? How little can you bend them and still ski well? In general: the less you bend your knees, the less tense your legs will be and the more quickly you will be able to react to counter imbalance. You will find, too, that it is better to stand tall and loose than to crouch. Crouching is more stable, in a static sense, but less *responsive*, therefore less balanced.

A responsive, reacting body was just one phase of humanistic thinking that proved fruitful. Another that had enormous application to skiing was 'centering." The idea developed from the obvious notion that every body had a literal center. (The definitive book on the subject is Denise McCluggage's *The Centered Skier*.) Put your hand on your stomach below the navel: your geometric center lies under the middle of your palm, halfway back to your spine. The point is that balance should always be corrected by moving from this center point because it requires the least movement to get you steady again and keeps the body relaxed. If you bend forward from the waist to recover from a backward fall, for example, then the lower body has to move back to balance it off, straining your back and leg muscles. If, instead, you move the *center* forward for balance, then the body stays upright, relaxed, and ready to move subtly into the next recovery.

When you float your center directly above the ankles, you are best equipped to counter imbalance from sudden acceleration or deceleration. You're right in the middle, keeping steady by minute balance corrections. This position will put your weight slightly forward as you ski, particularly on the steeper slopes. But many skiers lean more than *slightly* forward, bending deeply and leaning forward until their shins are braced against the front of their boots. It feels safe there, but the skier has actually cut down on his ability to move his center for balancing.

To feel what that means, unbuckle both boots and ski down an easy slope. At first it will feel impossible—you'll miss the control. But then you will find that you can ski by standing squarely over the skis, making subtle adjustments from your center. Stay unbuckled for half an hour's skiing, then buckle up, but loosely. You'll see that you're skiing with half the muscle strain and looking a good deal smoother.

Your centering line lies halfway between the skis; the trick to hovering over that line is to separate the skis by at least a few inches. The "1950s model skier" squeezed his skis and legs stylishly together but in the process immobilized his center. You can still see him on the slopes, squeezing his skis, looking stylish—and frozen.

Skiing centered is the antithesis of skiing frozen: you *allow* your center to be pushed toward imbalance, but you are so aware of it that you make constant corrections toward balance. It's a matter of simply focusing your mind on your middle—you'll feel when you're centered and will be sensitive to the muscle tension that develops when you're *not*.

Sensitivity not only to muscle tension and to your center but also to your pressure points, is critical because the pressure points deliver signals to your cerebellum. In skiing, the relevant points are obviously in your feet. There's a terrific balance exercise to improve "foot-pressure awareness"—like most of these exercises it begins on an easy hill. Stand at the top, with your ski poles planted a couple of feet ahead of you. Note exactly where the point of greatest pressure lies under each foot. Now rock forward. Feel the point of pressure move with you almost like a fingertip moving along the bottom of the foot. Does it move to the ball of the foot? To the middle of the ball of the foot? Rock back and notice how far back the pressure point travels. To the front rim of the heel? To the middle of the heel?

Once this pressure point becomes palpable, ski down the slope, making turns, simply take notice of how the point moves back and forth underfoot. You are amplifying the signals to your cerebellum, allowing it to make the necessary balance corrections *sooner*. You didn't learn a single technical move, yet you're skiing better, steadier.

And that's what this approach to balance is all about—helping your body send signals to your mind to speed up your regular balance mechanism. As a ski instructor, I've seen shaky skiers smooth themselves out simply by focusing. It's not really any more complicated than that to break your balance barrier. And once through it, you can go on to tackle the more technical obstacles of expert skiing. Still, it's a mistake to think of heightened body awareness only as a prerequisite for smooth skiing—it is itself one of the sport's greatest rewards, helping you feel centered, steady, alive.

MORTEN LUND is a contributing editor of Ski Magazine *and a certified ski instructor at Stratton Mountain in Vermont.*

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ETHICS

BY HARRY STEIN

AMERICA FIRST

Believing that our way is the best way can lead to moral blindness



ILLUSTRATION-MICHEL GUIRE YAKA

ONE EVENING last year, motel-bound, I flicked on the Zenith and settled back for a spell of the game show called *Family Feud*. Now *Family Feud* may not pass for high art, not even in Burbank, but it makes for absolutely terrific sociology.

Midway through the show in question, for example, host Richard Dawson eyed a pair of members of that night's competing families and posed the following query: based on the responses of one hundred people surveyed, "name something tourists go to see when they go to Paris." Lightning fast, hands reached for buzzers. "The Eiffel Tower!" came the first response, and indeed, it proved to have been the number-one answer proffered by the anonymous sample. But—I'll assume here you know how this wonderful game is played—rather than try to come up with the remaining answers hidden on the big board, the lucky contestant, urged on by her brood, chose to pass the question on to the representatives of the rival family. The first of these was obviously at a loss. "Uh... restaurants?" she offered finally. No luck. A huge X appeared on the screen, accompanied by a discordant *naaaaah* sound. It was now her sister's turn. She agonized a long moment, made a tortured face, and was unable to make any response at all. *Naaaaah!* Strike two. Sister number three was next, smugly waiting with what she thought was a surefire answer. "Clothes stores." *Naaaaah!*

Now the hot potato went back to family number one, huddled in conference, if together they could just come up with one of the mysterious sights of Paris, they would take a commanding lead in the game. At last, pressed by Dawson, they offered their tentative response. "The Lavooor Museum?"

Yes, indeed, there it was on the big board—MUSEUMS—right after FOLIES BERGÈRES and ARC DE TRIOMPHE.

Sitting in my motel room, disbelieving, I reached for a note pad. The Lavooor Museum? This I wanted verbatim. We were, after all, dealing with *Paris* here. For three hundred years the intellectual and cultural hub of the Western world. The Rights of Man. Molière. Diderot. Napoleon. Hugo. The Dreyfus Affair. In the history of the planet, Paris is, arguably, the single most significant forty square miles on earth. The Lavooor Museum?

But I should not have been surprised. With the possible exception of the French themselves, there exist no people in the industrialized world so utterly unconcerned with the world beyond its borders as we—nor one so contented in its ignorance. The message reaches us in earliest childhood and accompanies most of us to the grave: we Americans *matter* more than others, the way we do things is, by definition, the best way. Why, then, investigate other cultures? Why—as many high school students will ask—even bother with another language? *Why?*

Of course, the case is occasionally made that at least we are less ethnocentric than we used to be. And it is true that just a generation ago, my elementary school friends and I used to congratulate ourselves that our country had never lost a war (we took the liberty of discounting the War of 1812 as a "draw"), then came Vietnam. And many of us came to adulthood secure in the belief that American know-how was unmatched, and unmatchable, anywhere else in the world, now we own Sonys and Toyotas.

But that is an intellectual concession, this grudging recognition that maybe we are not without fault, after all. In our guts, we Americans know—*know*—that we really have it all over other people.

God knows we continue to act that way. Think of the numberless American tourists who simply assume that the average foreigner in the street speaks English—and that if he doesn't, talking a little louder will cause him to. Indeed, we even tend to have difficulty interesting ourselves in fictional beings who do not resemble ourselves. Martin Cruz Smith, the author of *Gorky Park*, reports that when he decided that his hero would be a Russian—this was, after all, a Russian tale—even people in the industry were incredulous. "We've set books everyplace in the world—in Borneo, in the Philippines, in South America, wherever—and the hero was always American, as if this were a natural state of affairs," says Smith with bemusement.

And why not? The assumption of our own superiority is implicit in virtually everything we read or see or hear. Listen, for example, to a telecast entitled "The Saudis," with CBS's Ed Bradley in conversation with a prominent Saudi educator, a woman named Cecile Rouchdy.

Bradley: The work customs in your country. Women and men—even women doing secretarial work can't work in the same office with a man.

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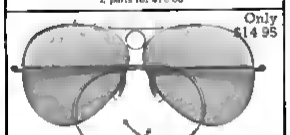
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Rouchdy Because we are a segregated society As a Westerner, you can't accept a segregated society
Bradley But you can?
Rouchdy I am. I'm part of the segre—
Bradley And you think that's okay?
Rouchdy Why not? Why should you always look upon it—whatever is different from your society is wrong?
Bradley Well, look at Saudi Airlines for example There you have Saudi men working in the cabins as stewards Saudi women are not permitted to do that.
Rouchdy Yes
Bradley That doesn't make them equal.
Rouchdy Why should—I mean, you keep talking about equality—

A moment later, seemingly oblivious to what he has heard, Bradley looks into the camera and intones, "It would be easy, by our standards, to judge Madame Rouchdy harshly, until you realize how far Saudi women have come "

Obviously in the world as we find it, arrogance and parochialism can be a dangerous mix. There was a lot of snickering when an American President stunned a Mexican president with a remark about Montezuma's revenge, but the world view it represented was considerably less than amusing. Not, of course, that smug ignorance is the particular province of any party or administration. A year ago William P. Clark, Ronald Reagan's newly designated Deputy Secretary of State, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he did not know the names of the prime ministers of South Africa and Zimbabwe, and in general demonstrated what *The New York Times* referred to as "his apparently thin grasp" of foreign policy—and he is now making policy.

Over the years we have, of course, paid a devastating price—in Latin America, in the Near East, above all in Southeast Asia—for our ignorance of other cultures. Our tendency—often more like a reflex—is still to support those culturally more like ourselves over those less like ourselves.

There are likely to be continuing repercussions of a foreign policy based on such intractable ethnocentrism. And all of us whose understanding of other cultures is constrained by ignorance—whose curiosity is satisfied by the travel section of the Sunday papers, or the occasional outing at a foreign restaurant, or even what is picked up on quick hops abroad—will continue to suffer a loss in our own lives.

There is, for starters, no surer way of achieving perspective on one's own situation than by peeking at it, however briefly, through alien eyes. Not long ago, I met a visitor to these shores from Bangladesh, an earnest young man of boundless curiosity. During the course of a two-hour conversation, he asked many, many questions about the locals, expressing wonder whenever the talk turned to social values. "And old people?" he asked at one point. "In my country, all the generations live together—old, young, everyone in one house. I do not think it is that way here."

"Very rarely."

"Where do they live?"

"Sometimes alone, sometimes in special homes for old people." I noticed his consternation. "In Florida and Arizona, we have old-age communities that are really not so bad at all." I smiled. "They even have fun, I'm told. Golf. Shuffleboard. Dancing. Plenty of companionship. What could be better?"

He stared at me for a long moment. "That is one of the saddest things I ever heard, I think."

But more directly to the point, if the song lyric does not have it precisely right—if it is not so much "a big, wide, wonderful world" out there as much as a confusing and sometimes pitiless one—then our responsibility to face the world is all the greater. In shutting ourselves off in living lives preoccupied with only the familiar and the routine, we become not only shallower but infinitely less vital—and usually less humane—human beings.

The evidence is too much with us. Last September 26, for instance, I sat with a dozen relative strangers watching, in an atmosphere of mounting excitement, as Nolan Ryan threw his record fifth no hitter. After the game, someone switched to the news, and we watched a report on those Vietnam veterans who continue to suffer the aftereffects of exposure to Agent Orange. The effects are tragic—there were shots of vets' children who'd been born with extreme deformities—and one could not but feel enormous sympathy for the angry ex-soldiers whose wife has had several miscarriages, who said that he would *force* any son of his to go to Canada rather than allow him to fight in another such war. The reporter on the story, obviously moved, noted that there were thousands of Americans who'd served in Vietnam during the period the chemical was in use and who might thus be concerned about its long-term consequences.

But not a word, not a syllable, was spoken in the entire segment either by the reporter or any of the vets, on the effects the stuff is almost certainly having on the millions of Vietnamese who happened to live in Vietnam when we dropped it. Moreover, only one soul in my group even remarked on the anomaly, and her complaint was met by palpable indifference on the part of the others.

But, as these things go, the point was brought home to me with even greater force by a personal encounter. Laura, as we shall call her, is a young Argentinean whom I came to know when she recently visited this country from her new home in Paris. She is immensely likable, a person of humor, gentleness, reflection, and passion. But the story of her recent past, like those of so many of her countrymen, is a tale of such complexity and tragedy that it puts even the most baroque of our soap operas to shame. Laura's brother, an administrator at a mental hospital in Buenos Aires and the person she was closest to in the world, is dead, shot down on the street because of the progressive policies (the elimination of electroshock treatment and straitjackets) he was trying to institute in his domain. Her father, who witnessed the killing, had a heart attack and died half an hour later.

But there is much more. You see, Laura was in the United States to try to secure rights to see her son, now five years old, whom she has not laid eyes on in three years. The boy's father, Laura's ex-husband, is an American. He took the child from Argentina three years ago, shortly after Laura herself was arrested for her activities during her days as a medical student some years before, a militant, nonviolent socialist. Laura had helped organize a dispensary in the slums of Buenos Aires. Such a past, in the Argentina of General Videla, is grounds for imprisonment, at the very least. Laura was, in fact, lucky: she spent only two months in one of those places euphemistically known as "detention centers," where torture is routine, and another year and a half in the relative comfort of a prison. On her release, she was permitted to leave the country for asylum in France.

Laura has discovered that her ex-husband has remarried and that the child has been told that the new wife is his natural mother. They have relocated, leaving word with his friends that he intends for Laura never to see the child again.

That is a prospect that, at this writing, appears entirely likely, for Laura has found that it is not just one bitter former spouse but an entire society that is arrayed against her. The courts have shown her precious little sympathy, for there, as almost everywhere else she turns in this country, she finds herself branded by her experiences. "The attitude is that I am something terrible—a terrorist, a murderer—or else why else was I imprisoned," she says. "Not only do the authorities take this position, but so even do most people I meet socially. They might understand about Argentina in the abstract, especially after Timerman, but they simply cannot grasp it. The attitude here is that if a person is in jail, that person must be guilty of *something*—and is certainly an unfit mother."

All at once, Laura halts her narrative and tears of frustration well in her eyes. 'Do you know that Timerman offered to be tortured live over American television, just so Americans would understand what torture is?" She stops and shakes her head. "Who knows, maybe that is the only way Americans *can* understand, if they see it on TV."

HARRY STEIN is a contributing editor of Esquire magazine



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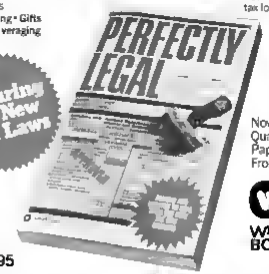
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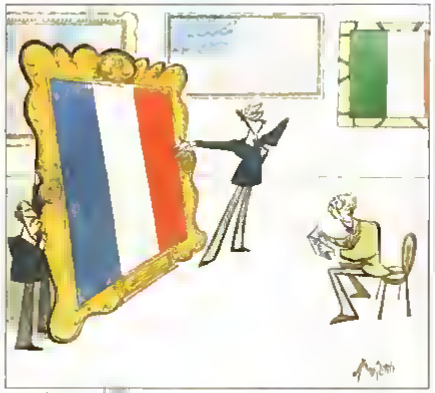
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Man At His Best

A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO QUALITY AND STYLE

SMART MONEY

The Fine Print of Buying Fine Art



ILLUSTRATIONS—ARNOLD ROTH

For acquisitive souls undaunted by today's healthy market, there probably has never been a better time to collect art. Galleries and auction houses abound, offering more types of art and antiques than ever before. In collecting, as in many things, the more you learn the more satisfying the endeavor becomes. With a wealth of art courses, museum shows, and books and magazines available, you can readily become a first-rate amateur. However, even when you're sure about a work you are buying, a few caveats are in order.

Most new collectors are unfamiliar with what might be called the art market's "hidden side"—the rules and rites of purchase, some official, others merely customary. These can be especially Byzantine for Americans buying art outside the United States. problems can arise with export rulings or value-added taxes or idiosyncratic trading methods, so it's smart to consult a knowledgeable dealer or attorney before you travel if you think you'll be returning with an ancestral portrait or a rare porcelain vase. By comparison, the business of buying art in America is downright simple. Still, it's wise to be mindful of a few general practices, especially when purchasing works by living artists.

WHAT DO YOU OWN?

The collector does not automatically acquire the work's copyright with his purchase. This means that although the painting may be hanging in his living room, he doesn't necessarily have exhibition rights or the right to "use" the image. If he thinks the painting would look marvelous on T-shirts or Christmas cards, he can't legally "borrow" it if the copyright belongs to the artist or his heirs. Copyright law is elaborate, and a major revision in 1976 complicated the issue even more. So it's best to discuss all copyright matters with the dealer before the sale.

There is a common gentlemen's agreement reached prior to a sale concerning exhibition rights to artwork.

For young artists scrambling to build a reputation, museum shows are essential. A museum planning a show may seek assurances from the gallery that a work will be loaned even after it is sold; it's common practice for the gallery to ask a buyer for that assurance whether or not the buyer is acquiring the copyright. Some artists even stipulate in their gallery contracts that whoever buys a work *must* lend it to a museum if the situation ever arises. One Manhattan art dealer adds, "We may not want to sell to someone who doesn't want to lend to a museum."

Of course, most collectors are willing to cooperate because exhibitions enhance the work's importance—and eventually its price. As does the appearance of the work in museum catalogs, magazine articles, critical reviews, even gallery advertisements. Both galleries and auction houses usually retain slides and glossies of works sold over the years, and if museums or magazines want to reproduce a work, permission will be obtained from the owner of the copyright, and the collector will be asked if he wants his name in a credit line.

RESALE ROYALTIES

One state law that can surprise the unsuspecting is California's resale royalty act. In effect since 1977, this controversial legislation entitles any living artist to 5 percent of the purchase price when any painting, drawing, or sculpture by the artist is resold for one thousand dollars or more above the previous price and if the seller lives in California or the sale takes place in California. If a Californian had owned Jasper Johns's painting *Three Flags*, which sold for $1 million just over a year ago, Johns could have made fifty thousand dollars on the deal. This is the reason the law exists, say its supporters. When a work of art appreciates in value over the years, the artist deserves to share in the gain.

Opponents of the act argue that it not only gives a business edge to dealers everywhere else but also raises the possibilities of what one legal authority calls "grotesque" situations. For instance, if a London collector bought a work by a Spanish sculptor and then moved to California, leaving the sculpture behind, he would still have to pay the artist a royalty when the piece was sold, even though the work itself never entered California.

What does this mean for the collector? First, it's important to stress that the royalty is charged only for works that have been sold before, this is a *resale* royalty. And it does not affect prints—just paintings, drawings, and sculptures. Moreover, it applies only when the secondary sale exceeds the first. So if the value de-

creases, there is no royalty.

But there's also the matter of enforcement, which rests with the artist, not the state. The law requires the dealer to locate the artist and present him with his royalty. If the dealer doesn't do this and the artist finds out, he can sue. And that's it. It's all a matter of honor. Some California dealers quietly admit that the law is frequently overlooked. Enforcement isn't easy—or particularly successful. Indeed, the entire nation would probably have to adopt this act to make the law stick.

EXTRAS AND GUARANTEES

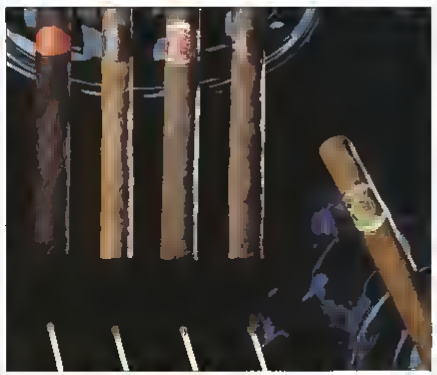
A word on price. Like automobiles, works of art can have extras piled onto the base price. Many auction houses charge a "premium," with both buyer and seller paying 10 percent of the hammer price. Galleries do not add a surcharge on the price to the buyer but usually take 20 percent from the seller. (This varies from gallery to gallery.) In addition to premiums, be prepared for sales tax and delivery fees.

Does art have a money-back guarantee? It does when it's purchased from a reputable dealer and the sale is in writing. Most dealers will return your money if you later discover the attribution is wrong, the condition isn't what you expected, or the work simply "isn't right"—art-world argot for fakes and forgeries. In the state of New York, a new law that will take effect on March 1 requires that all print vendors provide collectors with a guaranteed statement as to the size of the edition, the number, the date the work was made, et cetera. If the information proves to be false, the collector gets his money back.

Auction houses also offer warranties, but these are usually limited to one or two years. Warranty terms vary sharply from house to house, so it's best to read carefully the list of sale conditions each auctioneer publishes in the catalog. It also makes sense to inspect every object before you buy, and to do some comparative shopping. Condition is extremely important in determining price. Collectors should always see a drawing or print outside its frame. Anything of particular value painted before World War II should probably be scrutinized under ultraviolet light, a startling number of paintings have been retouched over the years, and the buyer should be aware of the degree and quality of the restoration.

It's good to remember also that many dealers will let collectors take a picture home on approval. Indeed, for some collectors, a painting's value can rise or fall depending on how it works over the living-room sofa. Finally, heed the great Picasso's advice: "By all means buy with your head. But do not forget to enjoy with your heart." —**Terry Trucco**

FIRST-RATE
Five Great Smokes



PHOTOGRAPHS—JAMES WOJCIK

What *are* the five best cigars? Although many puffers still believe that only the true *puros*, Havanas from Havana, reflect the peak of cigar quality, most connoisseurs in this country choose from among the great smokes now made outside Cuba. Without question, many of the famed cigar-making families who fled the revolution have successfully re-created their products' celebrated quality on the balmier shores of free enterprise. Today, only the most ostentatious gent will spend five dollars or more for a cigar from Cuba when for ninety cents to $1.75, depending on the size, he can buy one equally as good.

The cigars recommended here are blended from various tobaccos for consistency, and it is their consistency that makes them great. Even so, as with vintage wines, the flavor and quality of any brand will vary, particularly from year to year. It's also true that a cigar one man considers mild and sweet another may find pungent or bitter. (As a rule, though, the clue to the strength of the cigar is its color: the darker the cigar, the stronger the taste.) Many cigar smokers don't stick religiously to one brand but choose their cigar of the moment based on that moment's desire, and you'll have to find your own order of preference from among these elite five.

(1) Many a smoker's choice is the Dunhill *Montecruz*. Made from Central and South American tobaccos, this mild cigar is famous for its extraordinarily consistent quality. If Dunhill doesn't have the right tobacco, the firm won't make cigars. (2) The slightly stronger *Te-Amo*, with a wrapper that burns more quickly than the Montecruz, is often considered closest to the richness of a Cuban cigar. Indeed, Te-Amo uses tobacco grown in Mexico by Cuban workers. Until recently, the quality of this cigar was troubled by bad crops and labor problems, but today it has regained its eminence. This is a cigar with stand-up flavor—good with a glass of whiskey. (3) The *Don Diego* is made from Dominican tobacco, and it's just right for times when a lighter smoke is desired. The green-wrapped version has a special sweetness. (4) Jamaican tobacco is generally a "softer" smoke than Dominican, yet the Jamaican *Macanudo*, though mild, has a nicely distinctive flavor, enjoyable after a meal. (5) For a more emphatic taste, there's the *Partagas*, also from the Dominican Republic. It's sometimes thought to be hot-burning and takes hard pulling. Of these five smokes, this is the one you either love or leave behind.

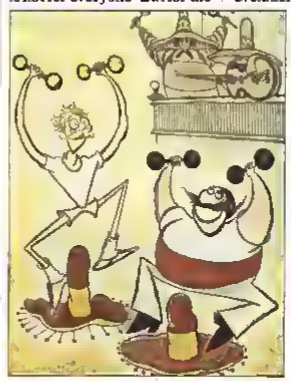
Nearly as good as the five above but with a slightly harder edge is the *Encanto*, a relatively new cigar from Honduras. The tobacco is grown from vintage Cuban seed, and the cigar can be had for the bargain-basement price of seventy-five cents. (Almost any cigar less than seventy-five cents is marred by paper and chemicals added to the tobacco as filler.)

Finally, a few words on cigarmanship. Though you can prepare a cigar any way you please—by clipping or biting off the tip, leaving the band on or taking it off—you should smoke it like a cigarette, only much more slowly. Take short puffs, holding it in your hand between puffs to keep the cigar dry. (Figure about fifty puffs to a five-inch cigar.) The initiated rarely smoke a cigar more than halfway down—never to a stub—and it is said that the sign of a true cigar smoker is that his hand "just happens" to be passing over an ashtray when the ash falls of its own weight. ●

THE ENLIGHTENED TRAVELER
Resorting to Fitness

Far be it from us to suggest that you're overweight and out of shape. But as long as you are—and even if you aren't—we think this is a not-half-bad time to consider a week at a fitness resort.

Granted, a fitness vacation is not for everyone. But for the man who takes his leisure as seriously as he takes everything else, a health retreat can be a thoroughly revitalizing experience. Such a man would do well to head south of the border to Rancho La Puerta, on the Baja peninsula.



MORE THAN A FAT FARM

Not a rigid fasting facility like the Ashram in Calabasas, California, or a jumbo we pamper-you institution like La Costa in Carlsbad, "the Ranch" is a good choice because you can do as much or as little as you want. From the moment the Ranch van picks you up at the San Diego airport, everything is geared toward easing the strain of work-weary days. The hour-long drive takes you through the prosperous little town of Tecate, past brush desert plains, and high up into the Sierra Madre foothills to the Ranch itself: 150 acres of rugged terrain, a clutch of low brick buildings and cottages scattered among the grape arbors and gnarled jacaranda trees. Some of the cottages are fairly spartan; later additions—many with fireplaces—are quite posh, reflecting the evolution of the Ranch.

Rancho La Puerta was planned as a no-frills health camp, a kind of physical and spiritual utopia—pure air, pure food, pure thought. In 1940, that was pretty far out. Somewhere along the line, people noticed that they got skinnier on all that purity. And now, some forty years and 250,000 guests later, what the Ranch offers is a traditional slimming-and-fitness program. No mystics or bizarre cultists here. The hundred or so guests who turn up each week include an impressive number of the corporate high and mighty, who come to reduce tension and stress with a low-key regimen of exercise and sport on a largely self-imposed diet.

What these men particularly enjoy about Rancho La Puerta is the lack of pressure. There are no telephones in the rooms, no room service, and no pretensions. They find a friendly, informal place, well suited to couples but not uncomfortable if one goes alone. The shape-up regimen is not intense. This is a place to relax, lose a few pounds—a periodic holding action, if you will—and, if you're ready to apply what you learn, to leave with a head start on living in a healthier fashion.

None of the activities at the Ranch are compulsory. Nobody makes you rise at dawn to hike up Mount Cuchuma, its summit still obscured in the Mexican morning mist. Yet a surprising number of sweat-suited souls do just that. Clearly, guests are motivated to take advantage of all that is available. Hour-long classes, over twenty in all, are held throughout the day, usually outdoors: yoga, aerobic exercises, dance classes, pool workouts, a running clinic.

Male guests join in these sessions, but there are more rigorous versions for men only. In these classes you learn conditioning with weights, designed to tone the entire body; stretching to relieve tightness, kinetic toning, a kind of "spot" exercising to build up specific areas. Other classes vary from week to week depending on the interests of the guests. Always the point is to instill techniques that you can take home with you, and the large staff is easily approachable, so you can seek out special advice.

Softball, basketball, or volleyball games are organized daily, and facilities abound for all manner of sport: tennis courts, swimming pools, gyms, putting greens, miles of hiking trails. There is also a two-and-a-half-mile Parcours, which, by nature of its layout, acts as a "coach" for those inexperienced in pacing themselves through an exercise program. And you'll punctuate such vigorous activities with passive pursuits: massages, whirlpool and sauna baths. Indeed, you'll need to.

A DISCIPLINED TABLE

Meals at Rancho La Puerta are vegetarian, with occasional servings of fish. The basic 850- to 1,000-calorie Ranch diet—lots of fresh fruit, organically grown vegetables, and stone-ground bread—is satisfying, but there are additional dishes for bigger appetites. Fat chance one could run amok, though. Hardened carnivores can stray from the Ranch—the staff isn't fanatical about the matter—and Tecate, with a couple of respectable restaurants, is only ten minutes away.

(If you are very weak-willed and need to be programmed, you would do better to go instead to the Golden Door, a luxurious retreat run by the same management in Escondido, California. There you *must* follow the diet and exercise regimen.)

A stay at the Ranch has become increasingly expensive, but because the resort is in Mexico, prices are still comparatively reasonable: $600 to $1,000 a week, double occupancy. If you're overdue for an overhaul, write to Rancho La Puerta, Tecate, California 92080. Or call the Ranch at 714-478-5341. ●

THE SEASONED COOK
Pheasant: A Taste for Something Wild

A taste for game is probably as much a mental as a biological need. After enough store-bought or restaurant-cooked food—the most so bland that it has to be drenched in sauce and the fowl so sweet that it tastes like warm-water fish—you begin to think of something wild, something that tastes like itself.

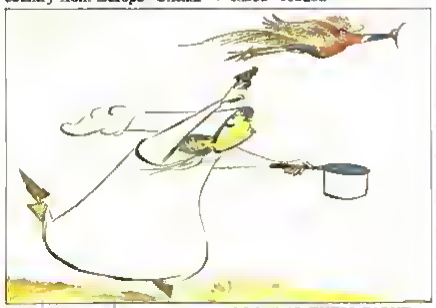
Now, game is best when you have killed it yourself. There is no way to prove that empirically, but most people who eat wild birds or meat will tell you that it is true. Killing what you eat makes eating more of an essential act, in a way that merely putting it on the credit card does not. Most people who sneer at that proposition have not tested it.

SHOOTING YOUR OWN

Pheasant is an excellent choice for a number of reasons. It is a stately bird, adaptable and handsome. Where it does not

survive wild, it can be hunted in preserves under managed conditions—which is to say it is possible to hunt pheasant nearly everywhere in the United States. Also, the bird likes relatively open country, so the walking is fairly easy, even pleasant. This is not the case with the ruffed grouse, probably the finest game bird of all, an American native, the bird is a citizen of very difficult terrain.

George Washington made the first recorded attempt to bring the pheasant into this country from Europe. Uncharacteristically, his attempt at transplanting failed. Owen Denny's attempt in the late nineteenth century did not, and by the turn of the century the bird was firmly established in this country. It became popular with both hunters and eaters.



PREPARING YOUR BIRDS

Let's say that you have spent a few hours hunting. You have some birds. Big, splendidly colored pheasants, a couple of pounds each, and they're all yours to take home and do whatever you want with them. What next?

Experts differ, but I say you don't have to hang the birds. In England, they age them for days before plucking or cleaning. This adds to the gamey taste, it is said. But finding a place to hang a bird in city apartments is hard, and they taste just fine if you skip it.

Begin by clipping the feet and wings with sharp scissors. Then, taking a few feathers at a time, carefully pluck the bird, working against the grain. Pop any visible shot free with the point of a sharp knife. When the bird is plucked clean, you will see a number of small hairlike objects sticking up from the skin. These are pin feathers. You should singe them off with a candle. Then open the cavity and remove the offal. Save the heart and liver. Wash the bird, drain it, and save the feathers if you have a friend who likes to tie flies. Now you are ready to cook. Invite friends and allow half a bird per person. Lay in some wine of the sort that is called "robust."

COOKING THEM RIGHT

There are all sorts of ways to cook pheasant. The most common is to roast the whole bird. Here, in my humble opinion, is the best way to do it.

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Rub each bird inside and out with salt and pepper. Fill each cavity with celery leaves, two bay leaves, half a lemon, and one whole peeled garlic clove. Tie the legs. Cover the breasts with strips of bacon, then spread a napkin-sized piece of cheesecloth over each bird. Put the birds in a baking pan. Pour melted butter over each until the cheesecloth is saturated. Place in the oven and baste every ten minutes.

Meanwhile, make a sauce from the livers and hearts, using cooking sprits, Marsala, or Madeira. Chop livers and hearts and sauté them in butter with chopped shallots. When your birds are cooked enough that the juices have barely stopped running pink—about an hour—remove them from the oven and place in a warming pan. Add about a cup of spirits to deglaze the baking pan (you can add more or less according to taste and the amount of sauce you need) and sprinkle with a little flour. Puree the sautéed livers and hearts (use a processor if you have one) and add them to the sauce. Split the birds and serve on wild rice. Your sauce goes in a warm sauceboat. Guaranteed to be sublime.

A close second to roast pheasant is fried pheasant, which is also a good way to offend any purists in your social circle. Simply break the bird as you would a chicken. Wash the parts and soak them briefly in milk. Sprinkle them with salt and pepper and roll very lightly in flour. Bring an inch of good oil to 375 degrees in a deep cast-iron skillet and drop the parts in. Cook each side for seven minutes, remove from the oil, and drain on a paper bag. Serve over toast points.

There are cookbooks full of other possibilities. Some people go so far as to smother the birds in a mound of sauerkraut. You can experiment, but remember that the bird is the thing, and too much decoration will only disguise its flavor. Once you have started down this road, it is not far to roast haunch of bear. But that is another story.

Note: If you would like to skip all the walking and shooting, you can buy pheasant in some specialty markets. Iron Gate Products (424 West Fifty-fourth Street, New York, New York 10019) is a reliable supplier of fresh pheasant in season and frozen birds year-round. They are normally shipped ready for the oven.

—Geoffrey Norman

CLASSICS

The Grenadine Tie

If it were not for the mere handful of European mills still willing to bother to make grenadine silk, nobody on earth would be making grenadine ties anymore. For, in fact, these luxurious ties are as much a nuisance to their manufacturers as they are a blessing to the men of taste who wear them. The grenadine fabric—a fine mesh weave of twisted strands of silk—is more difficult to make than any other material used for ties. One slip, one imperfection, and yards of the stuff are ruined; one brief pause and the weaver must unravel or throw out whole bolts. Small wonder the mills in England and America that tried to make grenadine eventually gave up. Smaller wonder still that retailers speak in hushed tones about the few that still ply the trade—three family-owned mills in Italy and one in Switzerland.

We are speaking, of course, about solid-color grenadine ties, not the ones with applied stripes or dots. And we are speaking of the plain weave, not the patterned jacquards or what have you. With grenadines, we are drawing your attention to an even-textured tie, not a nubby one, to a tie with a bottom that is pointed rather than squared off. And we are underscoring *pure silk*, man-made fibers have their place but not in ties, because they tend to pull at the knot. What we are singing out as a modern classic is a



TIES-COURTESY OF PAUL STUART, N.Y.

CONCORD MARINER SG

From the creators of the thinnest water-resistant watches in the world, comes the Concord Mariner SG. Singularly unique in design. A sculptural blending of stainless steel and warm, rich 14karat gold. The movement is Concord's new ultra-thin, impressively precise **nine/quartz®** Like all Concord watches, this Mariner SG is hand-crafted in Switzerland. Its look and **nine/quartz®** movement are indicative of a much more expensive watch.

Its price, however, is $890. For brochure send $1.50 to Concord, 650 Fifth Ave., New York, New York 10019.



rather conservative but adaptable item. It is a masterpiece of masculine elegance that is equally at ease with a plaid shirt or a plain one, with a busy tweed jacket, a blue blazer, or a chalk striped suit.

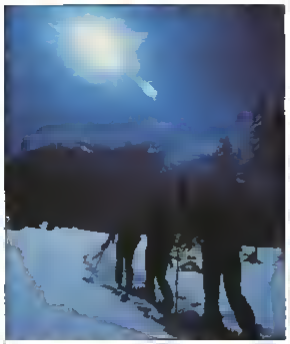
The grenadine tie is durable, it holds a knot well, and it is admirably resistant to soup stains. The colors available are generally burgundy (the most popular), red, brown, bottle green, dark blue, and cream. The cream-colored grenadine, as a matter of fact, is arguably the finest summer tie ever invented. It has just the right crisp brightness, and nothing looks better against an ice-blue shirt. Given the scarcity of the fabric, it is surprising that grenadines can be had for a moderate price: from $20 at Paul Stuart, to $22.50 at Tripler's, where there is a slightly wider selection of colors, to $25 at Brooks Brothers.

The secret of the grenadine tie, finally, is its texture, the subtle ways the tie catches the light. Its soft luster. Its rich look. What it says about the man who wears it. There has never been any fear that it will go out of style. Only that one day it will go out of existence.

—John Berendt

SPECIAL PLACES

Four Top Spots for Skiing Cross-country



Whatever happened to the good clean fun called cross-country skiing—the sport that was dirt cheap and as easy as walking to the bus? Touring centers have opened up in ski areas everywhere, along with shops devoted to Nordic equipment and accessories. This year's big technological breakthrough is the carbon-fiber ski pole—at ninety dollars, it's roughly the price of the whole ski, boot, and pole ensemble of ten years ago. Yet none of this has altered the primitive beauty of cross-country or taken away the thrill of gliding and poling through a silent birch forest; rather, it has lifted our gaze above the snow-covered golf course or cow pasture to higher, headier terrain. There's still time this winter to make tracks to one of these lofty spots.

GUDBRANDSDAL VALLEY, NORWAY

Norway invented this sport a few thousand years ago, and the country is one fluffy, rolling cross-country course well into April. Once you get your ski legs on the forested trails around Oslo, catch a three-and-a-half-hour train ride northward to the town of Vinstra in the long and snowy Gudbrandsdal Valley. This is Peer Gynt country. A half-dozen Peer Gynt hotels are spotted throughout the valley and along the Peer Gynt trail. At the ninety-eight-room Wadahl, the Gola, or the venerable Fefor with its low, thick beams and hand-painted chests, you'll find all the creature comforts, and you can ski from one to the next for lunch, a glogg break, or an overnight stay. An alternative is the Kampeseter, a little mountain lodge that's relaxed and rustic and half the fare of the Peer Gynt hotels. The Kampeseter has an active cross-country schedule: day tours to mountain cabins, tough climbs for experienced skiers. An even hardier way to do the valley is by hut-to-hut touring, which can be organized through Froelich International Travel (1270 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 2114, New York, New York 10020) and Scandinavian Airline Service. Wherever you go in the Gudbrandsdal, be prepared to (1) eat well and (2) fall a lot. Norway's landscape is up and down, and so is the skiing. If none of the braking methods work and telemarking (the ancient, balletic method of turning down a slope) is beyond you, just sit down with a smile.

FINNISH LAPLAND

If anyone can keep up with a Norwegian on skis, it's a dauntless Finn. In Lapland, they march right up the bald white fells on skinny skis, but you needn't follow: there is a wealth of flat-to-undulating terrain in this relatively unmountainous country. In late March, as Helsinki's snows grow gray and crusty, fly to Rovaniemi—the Lapp capital smack on the Arctic Circle—and drive 120 miles farther north to the blond-log Akaslompolo hotel, frequently up to its windowsills in fresh powder. Soon enough you'll realize that you're surrounded by serious skiers: Finns, all. Each morning the hotel empties by nine-thirty, everyone packing rucksacks with leftovers from the breakfast buffet and striking out into the adjacent national forest. The single set of signposted tracks meanders through open meadows and pine forests, and the rounded fells loom close by, impelling the gliding Finns even faster. Finland has been slow to promote skiing in North America, but this season its national carrier, Finnair, will arrange hut-to-hut tours in northern Lapland for accomplished skiers and easier packages at Kuusamo near the Russian border.

SUN VALLEY, IDAHO

Cross-country was not on his mind when Union Pacific's Averell Harriman opened his American version of St. Moritz in December 1936. It was downhill all the way. But today Sun Valley has a cross-country program of unlimited variety, thanks largely to Leif Odmark, who operates the Nordic Ski School and Touring Center. Odmark and his staff of twenty will send you directly out of the ski-school door onto eighteen miles of groomed trails, by bus over Galena Summit to the excellent cross-country terrain of Stanley Basin, and by helicopter to high snowy ridges where you can ski back down to Sun Valley or tool around the area and fly home. Fancy trail lunches are packed and peddled by Muffet Hemingway, Margaux and Mariel's big sister. Each night horse-drawn sleighs take visitors from the rugged four-story Main Lodge to dinner at Trail Creek Cabin. Or you can also cover the one-mile torchlit trail on skis.

JACKSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Cross-country is the lifeblood of little (population 500) Jackson, so you can rely on the considerable facilities. The Jackson Ski Touring Foundation has made a money earner of a vast trail system in the surrounding White Mountains. At foundation headquarters in the center of town, skiers flock to rent or buy equipment, sign up for lessons and guided tours, and purchase four-dollar trail tickets. Jackson itself is so interlaced with trails that you can start the day skiing out the back door of the Wildcat Inn, stop at the Christmas Farm Inn for a midmorning break, then pick up the Ellis River Trail and glide the seven miles to the Dana Place Inn for lunch. It's a thirteen-mile round trip, or you can return to Jackson by shuttle bus. Jackson's inns take turns each night putting on special events—a sleigh ride, a movie, square dancing, or folk

PHOTOGRAPH: FOCUS ON SPORTS

Technology for the side of the car you don't see.

It isn't brightly painted. It isn't pretty. The other side of the metal. You rarely see it. Yet it's a very important part of a car's body. It's where moisture can collect and cause rust. It's also where we've invested a lot of money and technology.

These surfaces, such as the inside of the doors and fenders, the trunk floor, and the rear quarter panels, aren't treated the way they used to be. We're treating them in an entirely different way. Many are now made from zinc-coated steel, while others are coated with a special corrosion-resistant substance developed from a petroleum-based compound. And a new plastisol spray protects the car on the lower side areas closest to the ground, where pebbles and stones can cause the most paint damage.

This isn't flashy technology. In fact, its only purpose is to help prevent rust.

That's our idea of how to use technology to build cars and trucks. Attention to details where you don't see them, as well as where you do. Appearance and comfort may sometimes sell a car, but today's customers demand real value.

Our goal, as the world's largest automotive manufacturer, is to maintain our lead by using new technology to build cars and trucks that perform better and last longer, with lower maintenance costs, than those built by any competitor—American or foreign.

General Motors

The future of transportation is here.

GM

music. But cross-country is the draw. The variety of terrain would excite even a telemarking Finn. There are fifteen to eighteen miles of gorgeously easy trails and some steep challenges for experts, namely, the Wildcat Valley Trail, which swoops 3,300 feet from the summit station at Wildcat Gondola all the way down to the foundation headquarters door.

—David Butwin

GOOD THINKING

Auto Insurance as God Would Have It

In 1980, Americans paid about $40 billion in auto insurance premiums. Had a forty-cent-per-gallon gasoline surcharge been imposed instead, the same $40 billion would have been collected, but the $10 billion spent *collecting* it would have been available to pay claims.

Why sell, one policy at a time, insurance that in most states everyone is required by law to have? Why not provide it automatically? A quick answer might be that auto insurance must be sold individually so people can choose exactly the coverage they wish. But choosing auto insurance is not like choosing tropical fish. In auto insurance, everyone wants precisely the same thing: complete coverage. It is only because the current insurance system is so inefficient that all but the wealthiest drivers must settle for less.

Currently, close to half of what we pay for auto insurance gets gobbled up by insurers, brokers, and lawyers. Much of the rest goes to overcompensate minor claims, leaving the seriously injured, in the main, woefully undercompensated.

The proposal that follows may seem at first blush to strike a blow against free enterprise. But auto insurance is already a much-tampered-with commodity. We are required by law to buy it, rates are set subject to government regulation, and millions of us are thrown into "assigned risk" pools, to be insured by companies who would rather not have us.

Imagine an automobile insurance system called Pay as You Drive. Rather than buy coverage as we currently do, a surcharge would be added to the price of each gallon of gasoline. The proceeds would fund a no-fault insurance pool.

Instead of having to process paperwork on 100-odd million vehicles each year, insurers would deal with only the much smaller number that were involved in accidents. After all, what useful service does an auto insurer provide until there is an accident?

Really, auto insurers do just two things. They collect premiums and settle claims. The first function is unnecessary; it could be performed automatically at the gas pump. True no-fault insurance would greatly streamline the second.

TOWARD TRUE NO-FAULT

I say "true no-fault" because right now even the states that purport to have no-fault systems don't. In every one of them, drivers may sue each other when damages exceed a certain (generally very modest) threshold. Under a true no-fault system we would give up our right to sue each other (we could still sue manufacturers) but gain assurance of swift, sure payment of our claims. Apart from a reasonable deductible, we would be reimbursed for all our medical expenses, property loss, and (within limits) lost wages and future disability. (For another few cents a gallon, a schedule of "pain-and-suffering" benefits could be added to the system.)

Today, the seriously injured accident victim typically waits months or years before receiving benefits that must be split with an attorney and that do not begin to cover his loss. Only those relatively few "lucky" enough to be injured by well-insured motorists whose fault can be proven make out well (if they're very patient). Yet it is poorly insured and uninsured drivers who cause most accidents. And many accidents are just that, *accidents*. Why spend billions attempting to assign fault? Why not spend those dollars on rehabilitation? It is doctors, not lawyers, we should have chasing ambulances.

Without the enormous expense of selling, underwriting, issuing, and administering individual auto insurance policies and with far less legal overhead in settling claims, each of our auto insurance dollars would provide about twice as much insurance as it now does.

BUILT-IN EQUITY

What's more, equity could be built into the Pay as You Drive plan without sacrificing efficiency. Do we want to penalize youthful drivers for their disproportionate share of accidents? If so (although I would argue it is counterproductive), the same computer that now issues drivers licenses and auto registrations could efficiently add surcharges tied to age. Also, surcharges tied to place of residence, driving record, and vehicle characteristics. Such charges, paid into the no-fault kitty, would lessen the gasoline surcharge required to fund the plan.

It's true, even with license and registration adjustments, the system would not be *entirely* fair—any more than it is entirely fair now. (Group health plans are not entirely fair, either.) But it would provide about twice the benefits.

Claims would be administered by the very same insurers who do so now. Each state's licensed drivers would be divided randomly by computer into groups of 2,500 or 5,000. Insurers could then bid for these blocks of business, just as, currently, they bid for the right to handle a group health insurance plan. Periodically, each block would be put out again for bid.

Insurers would settle claims as they do now. But because the system would be truly no-fault, the process would be much less costly. Groups handling claims that drew significantly higher than average levels of complaints could be suspended from bidding in that area for a period of time. (In extreme cases, of course, they could, as now, be sued for bad faith.)

Forty cents a gallon (or less, if licensing and registration fees were levied) would amount to three hundred dollars a year for a family that drove eighteen thousand miles at twenty-four miles to the gallon. *And there would be no other premiums to pay.*

TAKING THE FIRST STEP

The problem comes not in figuring out an efficient, equitable auto insurance system that would give almost everyone substantially more than he is currently getting. The problem comes in figuring out a realistic way to effect such a system in the face of the insurance companies, agencies, and trial attorneys who fight so hard to preserve the status quo. The federal government might be expected to represent our interests, but it has relegated responsibility for insurance to the states. The states, heavily influenced by the legal and insurance lobbies, have largely abdicated that responsibility.

A first step would be group auto insurance, offered by employers as a fringe benefit like group health or life insurance. But wouldn't it be nice if we could all be members of the group? And if we could secure the benefits of true no-fault insurance rather than merely the illusion of having it in some states?

—Andrew Tobias

This proposal, necessarily abbreviated, is adapted from Andrew Tobias's The Invisible Bankers: Everything the Insurance Industry Never Wanted You to Know, *to be published by the Linden Press later this month.*



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THE DRINKING MAN

Warming Up with a Hot Toddy



Consider that drinking well is akin to dressing well: both require skill in selection. The trick is to suit the occasion. In such a regard, preparing the perfect sweet tart of a toddy becomes the mixological equivalent of donning your best pair of silk pajamas.

Though dozens of hot alcoholic libations are now lumped under the heading of "toddies," the term specifically refers to drinks made with liquor, hot water, sugar, lemon, and assorted spices. Since toddies give off vapor and warmth and they feel good going down, they often serve as home remedies for illnesses that feature sore throats, chills, blocked passages of various sorts, and general congestion. But drinking toddies for health is wasteful; it is a purpose that misses the point. The glory of any proper drink is in its taste, and it is one of life's minor ironies that we squander the subtleties of our toddies on dulled, germ-thickened palates. During sickness drink tea or something else you would rather not taste.

MOOD ENHANCERS

Toddies are smooth, languorous, sexy drinks. The sugar in them is not to sweeten but to do battle—it takes the sting out of the lemon, the fierceness out of the alcohol. They aren't meant to go well with food. They aren't meant to go well with a lot of talk. What they do best is enhance the mood of the ideal setting: late nighttime, a huge bedroom, a sedate fire in the hearth, wind whipping and snow falling outdoors.

The classic toddy is a bourbon drink, but in the interest of accommodating a more delicate palate, keep rum in your bedroom cabinet as well. You'll need whole cloves, stick cinnamon, and ground nutmeg. Put a teaspoon of sugar, three cloves, a one-inch stick of cinnamon, and a thin slice of lemon in a heavy mug. Add an ounce of boiling water, stir, and then let it stand a bit. Add an ounce to an ounce and a half of bourbon or rum (don't pour with a heavy hand: you want these drinks to spread through you slowly, not overwhelm you in an instant), and then four more ounces of hot water. Stir again and then sprinkle nutmeg over the top.

The toddy is a teasing drink: it wakes your tongue up a little, clouds the mind with vapor, suggests coziness. It is the perfect nightcap for lovers. ●

WHAT EVERY MAN SHOULD KNOW

Tipping: Doing the Right Thing

Tipping is troublesome for many of us Americans for a lot of good reasons—worthy reasons, worthy-of-*us* reasons. Tipping seems to belong to an old-world, out-of-date, class-conscious society that we as a nation long ago said we didn't want any part of. It seems a noblesse oblige sort of an act that doesn't come naturally, because most of us don't consider ourselves noblesse enough to *be* obliged. Our wives and girlfriends don't tell us haughtily, "Toss the good fellow a few farthings," which would make us want to swat them anyway; rather, they say, "You tipped that guy way too much," which is at least egalitarian. We Americans believe that everybody's pretty much equal, some more than others, of course, and that a person should be paid a day's pay for a day's work and not have to touch his cap or kowtow to anyone.

We're not comfortable with the idea of others' cleaning up after us, fetching and carrying our stuff. We're independent, self-reliant, and proud of it. And when we ourselves are helpful to others, we certainly don't expect to be *tipped* for it.

And yet, when this total stranger comes up to you at the check-in desk in the hotel lobby—a pimply sourball of a young man, say, or some grouchy stooped-over older guy wearing some kind of not-quite-military uniform—and he takes your key and stacks your bags, your briefcase, even the stuff you *wanted* to carry yourself, onto one of those wheeled luggage racks and guides you up to your room, grumbling away to himself about God knows what, when you get to the room, you don't just say, "Hey, well, *thanks*, nice of you to show me up here, to give me a hand with the bags and all. I'll do the same for you sometime when *you* come to *my* city." Instead, you have to look him in the eye and give him a buck a bag, maybe a buck and a quarter if they're big ones. You never see this stranger again. But you have to tip him. It's how he makes his money. It's "expected." It doesn't *feel* right, but it's the right thing to do: it's one of those rare cases where what *is* right *feels* wrong. And there's a lot about tipping that's like that.

OVER OR UNDER

Overtipping is one of those self-created problems that probably wouldn't be a problem at all if you didn't worry about it yourself. Who cares, after all, if you overtip? Not the cabdrivers, waiters, captains, bellboys on the receiving end—that's for sure. Actually, restaurant *owners* don't much like flagrant overtippers: when someone comes in and starts handing out fifty-dollar and one-hundred-dollar bills, the staff gets all giddy and greedy, the regular customers get neglected and offended, and the restaurant's systems all get thrown out of whack.

But a little *moderate* overtipping—nothing gauche about it, all done quietly, just a couple of dollars extra on the tip or five or ten dollars held discreetly in your palm when you shake hands with the captain (not the owner, for God's sake!) as you leave, fifty cents extra rounding off the fare for a cabby, all done here and there and now and then as you move through life—spreads the sunshine, so to speak, and it's fine with

everyone, if you can afford it.

Undertipping is a bit more of a problem—also self-created, but in a different way. Anyone who chronically undertips probably does so because he hates to spend the money. It does seem awful sometimes how expensive cab fares and hotel rooms and, especially, good restaurants have gotten to be. A hundred bucks for lunch for three? You gotta be kidding! And then to have to add *another* twenty bucks for a tip?! It adds heartsickness to heartburn. But it's part of the essence of an expensive restaurant that one tips generously. After all, tipping isn't done on an ability-to-pay basis, and you've got to come across properly or else feel chintzy.

TO STIFF OR NOT

It's true that bad service can turn an occasion that's meant to be a jovial, celebratory indulgence into a nightmare. Hunger makes even the most even-tempered of us irritable, but it isn't only the preprandial irascibility that causes the trouble; it's also the resentment that comes from feeling you're not getting what you're paying for. If it's implied as part of the unwritten contract that you'll give a good tip for the service, then it should also be part of the deal that the service is good. If you feel they've broken their part of the contract, you're going to break yours and stiff the waiter.

There are two problems with this plan. One is that when you finally get the meal and eat it, you begin to feel better, the service usually improves, and the waiter may be full of apologies. So you relent and tip him anyway, and then you feel you haven't stood by your convictions. The other problem with stiffing is that slow service is very seldom just the waiter's fault. Who knows what all the trouble was—too many people came in at once, the kitchen was slow, who knows—almost any waiter would rather give prompt service than have the customers waving and snarling at him.

If a waiter is being rude, the best course is to disconcert him by asking, "You're not *trying* to be rude, are you?" Or, if he is being neglectful, talking with the other waiters, just say to him, "Could you be just a bit more attentive, please?" In both cases, it's infinitely more effective to speak up than to suffer in silence and then stiff him at the end of your meal. If gentle suggestion has no effect and you are in a restaurant where good service is clearly the norm, then you should complain to the captain or maitre d'. Stiffing is punishment—it has no persuasive power—so it should be a method of last resort and an act that you can live with.

Since tips are scarcely ever withheld in restaurants even for bad service, there's a basic formula that isn't deviated from all that much. Fifteen percent is average for an average meal out. For the kind of service that enhances a meal, in an establishment that's really doing its stuff right, you'd go the full 20 percent, plus maybe some extra bucks to the captain with thanks, and compliments and congratulations to the owner for making all this possible.

But, remember, however "right" any system might be, and however right it might *feel*, there's no "justice" in any rule of tipping. Tipping usually comes after the fact, so it can't affect the occasion: you're not going to sharpen up all the waiters or cabdrivers across the country, you're not going to impose any universal value system for service. On the other hand, any system you can arrange in your own life ought to be encouraged, and long ago I decided on a system of dividing the bill by six and leaving that amount as a tip, rounding it off one way or the other, as circumstances indicate, to make it come out even mathematically. I do this more or less everywhere. It comes out to 16.66666 percent, and no one falls all over me with gratitude for it—but I can live with that. At least I don't have to pass judgment on the conduct of my fellowman every time I take a cab or eat a meal out.

—Rust Hills

A BRIEF GUIDE TO HOW MUCH

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotels, Motels, Inns:

Doorman: One dollar for taking bags out of the car. Fifty cents for calling a cab.

Bellman: One dollar per bag; more if they're very heavy.

Room Service: Fifteen percent of the bill. If there is a service charge listed on the bill, this doesn't take the place of a tip.

Garage (Valet Parking): One dollar each time the car is brought up (fifty cents in smaller cities).

Maid: Leave a tip of one dollar per room per day at the end of the stay, and more if they've provided a special service.

RESTAURANTS

Bartender: Ten to 15 percent for drinks ordered at the bar before you sit down.

Waiter: Fifteen percent; more for excellent service.

Captain: Five percent. Tip him in person as you leave, or specify the amount on the charge slip.

Cellar Master/Wine Steward: Two to five dollars or 10 percent of wine cost if he's been particularly helpful. Tip him in person as you leave.

Maitre d': It's certainly not necessary to tip him, but it's a good idea if you're a regular or want to be remembered when you return. Five dollars and up, depending on how fancy the restaurant; tip him in person as you leave.

Coat Check: One dollar for one coat; for more than one, fifty cents per coat. If there's a charge for checking coats, the attendant should still be tipped. If the charge is seventy-five cents per coat, tip twenty-five cents per coat.

Washroom Attendant: Fifty cents, minimum.

TRAVEL

Airline Porter: One dollar for two or three bags.

Taxi: Fifteen percent for most trips. Up to 20 percent for above-average comfort or driving skill, or if driver handles luggage for you or stops and waits while you run an errand.

Limousine: Fifteen to 20 percent.

On the Train:

Porter: Fifty cents per bag.

Dining-Car Waiter: Fifteen percent.

Sleeping-Car Attendant: One dollar (for one person).

Snack-Bar Attendant: No need to tip.

APARTMENTS

Everyone who provides service throughout the year should be tipped at Christmas, with the amount depending on the size of the maintenance staff and on how much time they spent helping you.

Superintendent: Thirty to forty dollars; less if there's a handyman who does the repairs.

Handyman: Ten to twenty dollars.

Doorman: Twenty to thirty dollars.

Elevator Operator: Ten dollars.

If you're a guest in an apartment for a few days or more and any member of the staff has been helpful, tip on departure.

HEALTH/SPORTS CLUBS

Instructors shouldn't be tipped.

Golf Caddy: Three to five dollars per bag each round.

Masseur: Twenty percent.

Locker Room Attendant: Fifty cents for providing a towel or for other individual attention.

SERVICES

Hair Care: Fifteen percent at the barber. In a salon: Ten percent to the haircutter; one dollar to the person who shampoos your hair, two dollars if he/she also blow-dries it; one dollar to the manicurist. Don't tip the owner.

Shoeshine: Fifty cents.

Parking: Fifty cents. If you park your car in a garage on a monthly basis, it's still a good idea to tip each time; the attendants tend to get your car more quickly if you do.

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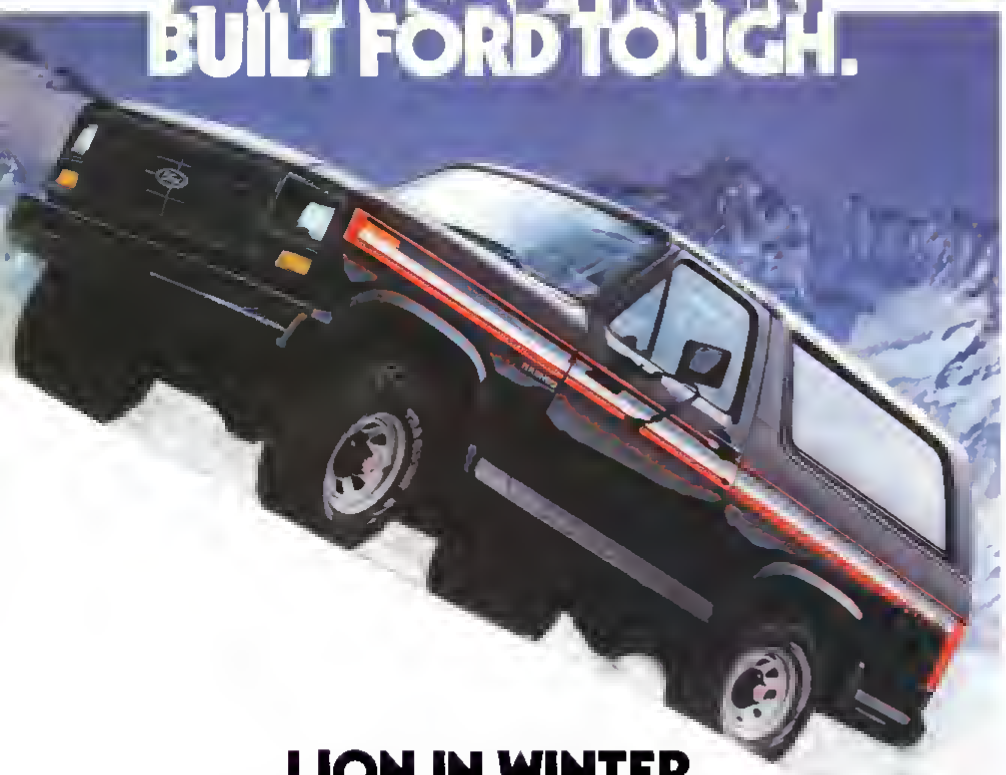
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The Neoliberal Club

by Randall Rothenberg

BLEEDING HEARTS NEED NOT APPLY.

NEOLIBERALS ARE COOL PRAGMATISTS WHO BELIEVE IN ECONOMIC ISSUES FIRST, SOCIAL PROGRAMS SECOND. THEY STRESS TECHNOLOGY, NATIONAL SERVICE, BETTER DEFENSE, AND THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT. WILL THE NATION BUY THEIR AGENDA?

ONE DAY IN APRIL 1980, Bill Bradley sat in his study in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. Orderly clutter abounded, edging off a bureau was a plaque drolly identifying him as SEN. BILL BRADLEY, FORMER NEW YORK KNICK, and precariously balanced on his desk were piles of papers, reports, and copies of the *Congressional Record*. The senator behind these stacks—at thirty-eight a bit paunchier than the last time you saw him sink a hook shot—was growing increasingly uncomfortable as I pestered him about certain . . . well, *similarities* observers had detected between Bradley and a small coterie of other young Democrats in Washington. What about this so-called new pragmatism, Senator? Do you and Gary Hart mean the same thing when you talk about the end of the New Deal? Is

RANDALL ROTHENBERG's *last piece for Esquire was "The Duck Book," in the October 1981 issue.*

there a common ideology, beyond your allegiance to Democratic-party principles, that binds you and Paul Tsongas together?...

Bradley's irritation exploded. "There is no new club!" he exclaimed, slamming his big fist on the table, shaking the paper pillars. "And pragmatism isn't an ideology. It just isn't."

But. On November 4, 1980, the great liberal stalwarts of the U.S. Senate were defeated in one of the worst Democratic debacles of the century; the Democratic party was left floundering, out of power and tethered to a Great Society that had been rejected by the American voters. Bill Bradley and a cadre of like-minded cohorts in Congress found themselves, suddenly, unconstrained by seniority and free to speak out on their views of the future.

Last fall, when I met again with Bradley, he admitted that there was indeed a group of like-minded Democrats in Washington. "You *do* find a group here trying to think through the problems of the Eighties"—a gentle swipe at his departed colleagues—"who see that the traditional Democratic responses really had their origins in the Thirties and are not going to meet those problems."

Translation: There *is* a new club. Forget all those pieces of punditry proclaiming the demise of the Democrats. Ignore the doomsayers, such as longtime Teddy Kennedy supporter Vic Kamber, who recently told a reporter, "The party is in terrible shape. It is bankrupt of ideas.... It is bankrupt of leadership and personalities." They're wrong. The new zeitgeist everyone is shopping for, the first new political philosophy in fifty years that's not merely a variation on a theme by Roosevelt or Hoover, already exists. It resides with a group of young, handsome Democratic upstarts who assert that *they* are the true political heirs of John Kennedy and that his younger brother is merely a usurper of JFK's spirit. They believe that America has already entered the postindustrial economic era. They talk about a "new agenda" for the Democratic party, a curious admixture of conservative and liberal measures—such as compulsory national service and a drastic reduction of the antitrust laws on the one hand and central economic planning and a negative income tax on the other. These newly visible Democrats call themselves progressives or balanced-budget liberals or compassionate realists or pluralists, but the most descriptive tag was coined by their spiritual guru, Charles Peters, the curmudgeonly editor of *The Washington Monthly*. In February 1979, Peters held forth at a party celebrating his magazine's tenth anniversary. "We are," he shouted, in a moment of drunken glee, "the neoliberals!"

The primary purveyors of the neoliberal philosophy, the core group within and outside of Washington, includes some senators—Bradley of New Jersey, Gary Hart of Colorado, Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts, and Max Baucus of Montana—and some congressmen—Colorado's Timothy Wirth, Richard Gephardt of St. Louis, New Jersey's James Florio, Leon Panetta of Monterey, California, Albert Gore Jr. of Tennessee, and Philip Sharp of Indiana. There are neoliberal governors (Jim Hunt of North Carolina, Arizona's Bruce Babbitt), a former and would-be governor (Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts), and local politicians (New York City Council President Carol Bellamy, Houston's recently elected mayor, Kathryn Whitmire). There are also the communicators of neoliberalism, such as economist Lester Thurow of MIT, Morton Kondracke of *The New Republic*, *Harper's* editor Michael Kinsley, James Fallows of *The Atlantic Monthly*, and, of course, Charlie Peters. There is even an ex officio capitalist: New Yorker Felix Rohatyn, general partner of the investment-banking firm Lazard Frères & Company.

The neoliberal legislators are young; most weren't even born in the Thirties, and they have only the vaguest memory of World War II. But they were too old to wear torn jeans and march against the Vietnam War. Caught between generations, they bridge the gap between the Depression era mentality and the baby-boomers. The neoliberals are children of the Fifties and thus reached their majority during an era of prosperity. They are cool and dispassionate—Fifties virtues—almost technocratic in their interests and their approach to problems. Their world—rather, the world they hope to create—is filled with microchips, robots, and computers. They espouse an adherence to liberal goals but insist on pragmatic means; they intend to remain free of ideological commitment and of the party's traditional interest groups. "We're not the people who went through and voted on the Great Society, or even Nixon's regulatory program," says Representative Tim Wirth. "We didn't have any stake in those programs, and we're able to view them with a little more skepticism."

Neoliberalism is equal parts strategy and idealism. It encompasses, according to Morton Kondracke of *The New Republic*, "the means by which the [Democratic] Party can retain its traditional compassion for the downtrodden in society without being wedded to categorical aid programs, quotas, government agencies, and interest groups as vehicles." One month after these words appeared last fall, *The New Republic* added to the definition in its lead editorial: "the purpose ... is to make good intentions marketable again."

Good intentions are historically associated with the party of Andrew Jackson, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and John Kennedy. God helps those who help themselves, the Democratic party helps



ILLUSTRATION: JILL KANDERSON

Politicians for the Postindustrial Age:

Neoliberals Paul Tsongas, Bill Bradley, Gary Hart, and Tim Wirth want to launch an economic future fueled by high technology.

those who can't. But this idealism is fused with an outlook that is squarely nonideological. "Realism—some of it Republican in its origins—combined with the value system of the Democratic liberal tradition is the objective," writes Senator Paul Tsongas in his new book, *The Road from Here*, the first major salvo in the neoliberals' war for the soul of the Democratic party. Tsongas, who has been attacked in traditional liberal circles in the year and a half since his address to the 1980 national convention of the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), defines neoliberalism as "the blending of realism and compassion in a manner that does not disrupt society. This combination requires judgment devoid of dogmatic blinders of ideological extremes . . ." Earlier in his book, Tsongas states, "My interest is in what works, not what should work. Reality does not bend to fit political theory."

Neoliberal founding father Charlie Peters has honed this argument even further: "Neoliberalism recognizes that there were a lot of things wrong with a lot of the big-government solutions we tried, but there was *never* anything wrong with the ends we were seeking—justice, fair play, and liberal ideals."

These characterizations of the new political tendency may seem unfocused, but to any careful political spectator one thing is obvious: neoliberalism has taken the younger quarters of the Democratic party by storm. While the Tom Wickers and Joe Krafts and other older pundits still insist on seeing the party's future in terms of old style Teddy Kennedy liberalism or Henry Jackson neoconservatism or Walter Mondale mushiness, the small core group of neoliberals is reaching a position of influence, quietly asserting itself, and proposing a method by which the Democrats can again become America's true majority party. "The question is," says a veteran of Sixties campaigns who is now an adviser to one neoliberal senator, "will people accept the new philosophy, or will they stick with the same old Kennedy bullshit?"

NEOLIBERALS REVERE PRESIDENT KENNEDY. "IF YOU ROUNDED US ALL UP AND ASKED, 'WHY DID YOU GET INTO POLITICS?' NINE OUT OF TEN OF US WOULD SAY JOHN KENNEDY," SAYS COLORADO SENATOR GARY HART.

Breaking Away from the Great Society

Teddy Kennedy is intrinsically linked to the notion of Sixties big spending, Great Society liberalism; neoliberalism can be understood only within this context.

"In the old liberalism, there was the assumption that not only was government intervention positive and necessary but there was no limit to what government could do to solve a problem," explains Susan Thomases, who, as campaign manager for Bill Bradley in 1978, can lay claim to having been an early propagandist for neoliberalism. "There was the sense that government resources could be harnessed to solve any problem and that there was a limitlessness to those resources."

The idea that government was the *best* problem solver—because it could not only maximize its own resources but mobilize those of the private sector as well—began with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Conventional wisdom has, until recently, seen Lyndon Johnson's Great Society as an extension of the New Deal, but, increasingly, young Democrats are viewing the Great Society as a perversion of FDR's programs. "What Roosevelt was talking about was economic liberalism," says the thirty-eight-year-old Thomases. "Johnson added to it social liberalism, and that had a very high price tag. If anything, I think the neoliberals are returning to Roosevelt liberalism or even more to classical liberalism, where there is a heavier emphasis on economic rather than on social issues."

Princeton historian Eric Goldman agrees that the Sixties distorted the image of American liberalism. "A lot of things that were called liberal had nothing to do with liberalism," says Goldman, who was a special consultant to President Johnson and whose 1952 book, *Rendezvous with Destiny*, is still considered the seminal analysis of modern American reform. "True liberals have always been concerned with making the *race* for economic and social status more equal. They don't believe in trying to force equality *later on*, which is what affirmative action does. Most of that Sixties stuff was socialist, and liberalism has always been antisocialist." Goldman also faults the notion—fostered by Sixties liberals, with their emphasis on opposition to the war in Vietnam—that liberalism is either isolationist or noninterventionist. "It really has nothing to do with foreign policy at all," he insists. "Real liberalism is part idealistic but also part pragmatic—you've got to keep the money flowing or you'll have a depression. Economic growth is at the heart of liberal doctrine."

But neoliberalism's return to economic issues represents more than just a wandering child come home. It also signifies a denial of one of progressivism's strongest trends, the belief in the malleability of man's essential nature—a recognizable tenet of Sixties liberalism. Change the environment for the better, change people for the better. Clean up the prisons and prisoners will be rehabilitated. There's no such thing as a bad boy. The whole Sixties shtick.

Neoliberals reject this approach out of hand. "During the Sixties, there was this belief that poor people were somehow noble beings," says Tsongas. "I think that's long gone." One night recently, Tsongas—who generally takes great pains to affirm his social-liberal credentials—capped a story about the difference between immigrants of his parents' generation, who came to the Lowell, Massachusetts, area to work, and some of the young Greek immigrants of today, "who hang around the coffee shop in Lowell because they have the safety net of welfare," by saying, "Liberals have got to realize that some people just don't want to work." The neoliberal retreat from the belief in the ultimate nobility and perfectability of man is not altogether new, of course—among modern Democrats John F. Kennedy was such a realist, which makes sense because this is a part of Catholic doctrine—but it is a significant departure from liberalism for a reform group to affirm, "There is such a thing as a bad boy."

But neoliberals remain classic liberals in their optimism about the opportunity for economic growth. The entire neoliberal agenda is geared toward economic issues. Even an idea such as compulsory national service is meant to foster an attitude more in tune with the cooperative economy of the postindustrial world. This economic emphasis sets neoliberals apart from the other group of postliberal social pessimists, the neoconservatives, who, as professional sociologists, understandably insist that America's problems, including our economic crisis, stem from a cultural breakdown. The word *culture* never crosses a neoliberal's lips. *Everything* is subordinated to, and a function of, the economy. Are social issues secondary? "Yes. Absolutely," replies Paul Tsongas without hesitation.

Representatives of traditional liberalism



have begun to lash out at this heresy. Patsy Mink, outgoing president of the ADA, attacked the new pragmatists in her farewell address to the trad-lib body last June. "There are too many knee-jerk naysayers who call themselves liberals but who now enjoy debunking the liberal programs of the last thirty years," said Mink in a thinly veiled reference to Tsongas. "These are the folks who were quick to suggest the agenda for liberals is to find 'new' solutions to the problems of social injustice, of poverty, and of the other unmet human needs." Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., an architect of Sixties liberalism, has also taken a swipe at Tsongas, claiming, 'Neoliberalism is so empty that [he has] nothing to say in explanation of it." And while trad-libs see neoliberalism as unconscionable conservatizing of the Great God Liberalism, conservatives view it as just a bad repackaging of the same old Kennedy bullshit.

The fact is, both the conservatives and the traditionalists are wrong. Like the folks in the commercial who argue interminably about whether Certs is a breath mint or a candy mint, they cannot see beyond their own rhetoric and assumptions. Neoliberalism is a distinct departure from the Great Society, but it is not an abandonment of the Democratic tradition. "We in Washington have gotten so inured to identifying a commitment to methods—in the case of Democrats, bureaus, agencies, programs, and taxes—that one's ideological commitment and integrity are linked to that," reflects Gary Hart, who may be the neoliberals' most likely Presidential candidate. "What is changing are not principles, goals, aspirations, or ideals, but methods. Very important that the distinction be made."

The Neoliberal Vision

The new methodology—vaguely labeled "pragmatic politics" by the new Democrats—is a clear reference to a political period grown hazy in our minds after a twenty-year hiatus. The crux of neoliberalism is that its legislative leaders are Kennedy's children. The *other* Kennedy.

As much as they dislike Teddy Kennedy, politically speaking, the neoliberals revere John F. Kennedy. Their emphasis on national service can be traced directly to JFK's inaugural address. There's even a smattering of ex–Peace Corps volunteers in the ranks, such as Tsongas and Connecticut senator Christopher Dodd, who has "been heard to make neoliberal noises," according to *Inquiry* magazine. What's more important is that many of these younger Democrats have consciously modeled their political presence on JFK's vision.

"I believe that John Kennedy was a bridge from Roosevelt and Truman and the New Deal to something beyond—the next logical step in the progression," says Hart, who was twenty-three when Kennedy was inaugurated. A self-proclaimed "exponent of generational politics," Hart embodies, to many observers, the new politics. Like Bradley and Tsongas, he is a Democrat born of Republican parents and presents a rather dispassionate image to the world—the result, he says, of "the absence of a burning social issue today." Hart's untraditional stance on defense and, increasingly, on economic policy has made him the most prominent leader of the neoliberal school. He freely admits that the slam President was the spur to his political involvement, and he believes the same is true of his neoliberal colleagues. "If you rounded us all up and asked, 'Why did you get into politics?' nine out of ten of us would say John Kennedy.... That is the dominant influence in our lives," he says. The former President, he adds, embodied three principles the new movement emulates: he was, and they are, "very pragmatic, not doctrinaire, and not programmatic."

The return to pragmatic politics, the "end of ideology" approach of neoliberalism, was quite clearly part of the Kennedy style. "Toward political ideologues he harbored an attitude bordering on contempt," wrote Bruce Miroff in *Pragmatic Illusions: The Presidential Politics of John F. Kennedy*. JFK once referred to himself as "an idealist without illusions." Many of his anti-ideology speeches serve well as cornerstones of the new movement. In his address to Yale's 1962 graduating class, he emphasized, "The central domestic problems of our time... relate not to basic clashes of philosophy or ideology, but to ways and means.... The point is that this is basically an administrative or executive problem in which political labels or cliches do not give us a solution."

The anti-ideology tenet has also been appropriated, disingenuously, by the neoconservatives, and for this reason at least one of them—Daniel Patrick Moynihan—has been mistaken for a neoliberal by, of all journals, *The New Republic*. But Moynihan, at fifty-four, is too old, too academic, too ideological, and too much the unreconstructed cold warrior to qualify. His centrist rumblings, his friendship with Bill Bradley, and his private touting of Gary Hart are more a testament to the New York senator's ability to sense which way the political winds are blowing than manifestations of any deeply felt neoliberalism.

There are more specific components of the Kennedy legacy that find renewed vigor in neoliberalism. The emphasis on technology, science, and research and development relates directly to his administration. Programs such as NASA and the National Science Foundation, to which the new Democrats urge a recommitment, flourished under Kennedy. Significantly, in a different-strokes-for-different-folks manner, various neoliberals claim various Kennedy antecedents in explaining their own concerns. Whereas Hart and Tsongas invoke the former President's pragmatic politics, Bradley cites JFK's internationalism, and Charlie Peters, who was plucked from the West Virginia legislature by JFK and became director of evaluation for the Peace Corps, believes Kennedy's influence on the movement sprang from "his respect for his father, the conservative respect for the guy who got the business going, who made the money.... You have to respect what's good about businessmen while at the same time remaining aware that they can be shits. I think Jack Kennedy, more than any President in modern times, understood that."

The other legacy from the Kennedy years is one of style and rhetoric. The neoliberals are not bleeding hearts. "All of us," says Hart, "are of a generation that, even though it is passionately involved, is not overly compassionate. I worked for George McGovern because I was against the war. I never walked in a parade, never broke a window. To end the war, you go out and organize the precincts and elect the President who'll end it. You don't demonstrate."

Hart's comment underscores the neoliberal style. It ignores the historical role of passionate public action in ending the war and in accomplishing social change in general. Bradley once worked with Harlem youth groups, but he never marched, never demonstrated. Like all neoliberals, he is fascinated with the technical details of organization, legislation, and governance, often at the expense of popular leadership. "He's a fact junkie," says Susan Thomases of Bradley. It's more than a mere attraction to facts—if a problem cannot be reduced to its factual content, to a cost-benefit analysis, it doesn't interest the neoliberals.

Most problems can be so broken down, they affirm, which is why the neoliberals think the Republican criticism of government intervention—that it inevitably screws up *everything*—is wrong. "It's not a question of getting the government off our backs," says Colorado congressman Tim Wirth. "The appropriate jobs of government—*that* is where the debate is going to occur, and where a progressive group, or a neoliberal group, will be willing to say, 'There are certain things we do want to do and certain things we don't.' And once we have decided the areas, we will also say that the federal government *does* have an aggressive role to play."

Missouri congressman Dick Gephardt agrees that a blanket yes-government/no-government approach makes no sense. "Government has a duty to intervene to see that people who are left out of the economy are brought into it, that they have a subsistence, that they are not left to be crushed by the economic forces of the free market," he says. "But there are other places where I would get rid of gov-

A Neoliberal Portrait Gallery

Legislators:

GARY HART The forty-four-year-old Hart has recently emerged in news reports as a potential candidate for the 1984 Democratic Presidential nomination, on a list that also includes Ted Kennedy, Walter Mondale, and John Glenn. Formerly saddled with a flaming liberal image due to his stewardship of George McGovern's 1972 Presidential campaign, the second-term Colorado senator has succeeded in promoting a centrist image for himself by pushing for a streamlined—but not lesser—defense, a position argued in detail by his friend James Fallows in the book *National Defense*. Most memorable quotation: "To get the government off your back, get your hand out of the government's pockets."

BILL BRADLEY Former Rhodes scholar, New York Knick, and all-American boy, Bradley, thirty-eight, has turned up again and again on lists—public and private—of leading lights of the Democratic party. (He was one of only two senators named in a Jack Anderson rating of Congress in the three categories of 'Most Respected,' 'Most Effective,' and 'Senate's Resident Brain Trust.') The New Jersey senator, now in his fourth year in Washington, is a cautious, plodding legislator acknowledged by his peers to be the Senate's energy expert. A millionaire with a college-professor wife and a five-year-old daughter, Bradley has recently stepped forward—in his role as chairman of the Senate Democrats' Economic Advisory Group—as a spokesman on tax policy.

PAUL TSONGAS First elected to the House in 1974, Tsongas was called "crudely ambitious" when he challenged Massachusetts's veteran senator Edward Brooke for his seat in 1978. Tsongas won but floundered during his first year—he even considered resigning—until his public utterances on the new liberalism drew national attention beginning in 1980. Author of *The Road from Here*, a neoliberal strategy guide, the forty-year-old Tsongas was subject to the wrath of Teddy Kennedy's Capitol minions who understandably assumed that his book and speeches constituted an attack. Tsongas managed a rapprochement with his state's senior senator and has emerged as a Democratic spokesman in his new role on the Foreign Relations Committee. A former Republican, ex–Peace Corps volunteer, and Yale Law grad, Tsongas has been attacked by traditional liberals for tempering his liberalism as a personal and political survival tactic. His reply: "What the hell is wrong with that?"

TIMOTHY WIRTH A former White House fellow and Undersecretary in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare under Johnson and Nixon, Wirth has represented a normally Republican Denver/Boulder district since 1974—the year a group of current neoliberals came to Congress in the aftermath of Watergate. Hollywood handsome, the forty-two-year-old Wirth is chairman of the House Democratic Caucus's Task Force on Long-Term Economics and of the House Telecommunications, Consumer Protection, and Finance Subcommittee. He has recently released a "postindustrial" economic plan with Bill Bradley that attempts to "incentivize" high-technology industries using the tax code.

RICHARD GEPHARDT A third-term congressman from St. Louis, Gephardt, forty-one, is an antibusing/antiabortion conservative who is also, as it happens, one of the most respected economic thinkers in the House. Known primarily for his coauthorship in 1980, with David Stockman, of a bill to deregulate the health care industry, Gephardt—who serves on the influential Budget and Ways and Means committees—attempted to mediate between the Democratic factions promoting conflicting alternatives to President Reagan's budget bill. Although the effort ultimately failed, Gephardt won friends among the House leadership.

Communicators:

LESTER THUROW A member of Lyndon Johnson's Council of Economic Advisors and an architect of George McGovern's 1972 "Demogrants" proposal for a guaranteed annual income, Thurow surfaced as the most influential neoliberal economist with the publication in 1980 of *The Zero-Sum Society*. The boyish-looking forty-three-year old MIT professor recently began writing a column for *Newsweek*—a platform that lifted George Will and the neoconservatives to prominence five years ago. Reduction of antitrust laws and the creation of a central economic-planning mechanism are two major Thurovian ideas making the rounds in Washington.

CHARLES PETERS Peters, fifty-six, the founder and editor of *The Washington Monthly*, is the godfather of neoliberalism. He half-jokingly refers to his ideas as "the gospel" and according to Michael Kinsley, Charlie's gospel "has *become* the conventional wisdom." Indeed, Peters's gripes—waste in government and the need for better defense, entrepreneurialism, and the draft—*are* the hot neoliberal issues. A self-styled crusader in the Don Quixote mold—a picture of the knight errant leans on a wall in his office—Peters has trained a cadre of journalists who have left his employ for higher circles. Among his protégés: Michael Kinsley, James Fallows at *The Atlantic*, *Harper's* contributors Tom Bethell and Taylor Branch, and Nicholas Lemann of *Texas Monthly*.

MICHAEL KINSLEY A brilliant writer and formerly the youngest editor in chief in the history of *The New Republic*, Kinsley, thirty, was recently named to succeed Lewis Lapham as editor of *Harper's*. A dispute with *TNR* owner Martin Peretz caused him to leave the magazine once—only to be lured back—before he finally left to take the *Harper's* post last fall. A Harvard and Harvard Law School graduate, Kinsley became the tax policy expert at *TNR*. While he was there, the magazine developed neoliberal policy and entered into a dispute with *The Nation* that presaged the coming split within the Democratic ranks between the neoliberals and the Campaign for Economic Democracy crowd.

MORTON KONDRACKE Executive editor of *The New Republic* for five years, the wry, good-humored Kondracke, forty-two, has been a prime promoter of neoliberal strategy from his Washington office since the middle of the Carter administration. "We don't have a George Will yet," says Gary Hart, "but Mort may be it." Significantly, Kondracke—already a steady commentator on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*—has been appearing monthly on the op-ed page of *The Wall Street Journal*, formerly a pulpit for Will and the neoconservatives.

FELIX ROHATYN A powerful international financier, the Austrian-born Rohatyn, partner in the investment-banking firm of Lazard Frères & Company, helped to hammer out the agreement between the unions, banks, and municipal government that saved New York City from bankruptcy in 1976. Still chairman of New York's Municipal Assistance Corporation (a local equivalent of his proposed Reconstruction Finance Corporation), Rohatyn "has a good chance to become the shadow Secretary of the Treasury for the Democratic party right now," says Kondracke. —R.R.

ernment, such as in health care ... You almost have to go area by area and say, 'What is your decision in that area?'"

Neoliberals also firmly believe that there exists such a beast as the national interest—something that, like a platonic form, has a structure and a coherence unto itself and is separate from individual group interests. "We have to start with a vision of where we want the country to be and then try to articulate that to people in broad terms and not fall back on interest-group politics," says Gephardt, voicing a perceived failure of the Carter Presidency. "The last election," he says, "showed that most people are not in a group, or, if they are, they have a sense of the nation as a whole that is more important to them than their allegiance to that group."

In pragmatic terms, the neoliberals can justifiably state that interest group, gimme-gimme politics has been disastrous for the Democrats and for the nation, leading the party into, as Gary Hart says, "too much concern not for central social issues but *fringe* social issues." However, the neoliberals did not rise through the ranks of glad-handing, ward-heeling Democratic politics (typified by House Speaker Tip O'Neill), and they don't fully understand the role of traditional coalition building. Instead, these young upstarts—some of whom, such as Hart and Bradley, never held elected office before ascending to the Congress—have an idealistic undergraduate's impression that the national interest is something engendered not by separate groups vying for pieces of the pie but by people recognizing the necessity of cooperation. A mythical consensus—who, after all, is to say what constitutes a *fringe* social issue as opposed to a central one?—is a key to the neoliberal mind-set.

Two interlocking sets of balances concern the neoliberals—that between the free market and government intervention, and that between the individual and the community. Traditionally, Republicans have cornered the first element in these sets and Democrats the second. Neoliberals find themselves defining a well-reasoned center position in each. "The model we're going to find has to build on two strains of American history," says Bill Bradley. "One is the strain toward individualism; the other—which is what the Democratic party has traditionally stood for—is community, teamwork."

The neoliberal concept of teamwork is borrowed from the Japanese model—Theory Z in current economic parlance. "You recognize that the passer on the team is as important as the scorer," says Bradley. "You've got to recognize that the guy who runs those machines and *maintains* them is as critical to the overall performance of the economy as the introduction of a new machine—assuming that you need the new machine, which I do. The idea that you're part of the community and that every part of the community has to be involved in striving for economic growth is a very important concept." The community theme is stressed by Lester Thurow, the curly-haired, baby-faced MIT professor whose 1980 book, *The Zero-Sum Society*, is the economic Bible of the new movement. "If you look at Reagan economics," says Thurow, "it's all rugged individualism. They don't think there is any such thing as community. The American economic environment can be too *much* individualism and no feeling of company loyalty, teamwork, whatever."

The problem with this analysis is in the application; you cannot legislate cooperation. And any attempts by Democratic legislators to coerce the work force (let alone management) into accepting a new attitude must come to terms with the party's largest traditional constituency: organized labor. However, Felix Rohatyn, chairman of New York's Municipal Assistance Corporation, believes that a declining industrial capacity forces labor to make concessions to management—and vice versa. His push for an updated national Reconstruction Finance Corporation is based on the conviction that a central planning body can act as a balance between the adversarial forces. "Labor will accept a government corporation to which it has input and that will be part of a three-way process of negotiations," he says. "I think you could do that with an RFC." Establishing teamwork in the face of decline, he adds, is not that difficult. "The thing that goes against the grain of human nature is unilateral sacrifice. Shared sacrifice is much less of a problem."

Cooperation and control; we've heard this all before, although—admittedly—not recently. It's worthwhile recalling that two variant economic policies have governed the twentieth-century progressive agenda. The dominant liberal economic stance, and the one with which we're most familiar, is procompetition, antitrust, and anti-big business. The alternate progressive view goes back to Herbert Croly and the "New Nationalism." In 1909, Croly (who went on to become the founding editor of *The New Republic*) called for concentration, cooperation, and control. Concentration meant that bigness was not necessarily badness if economic efficiency were served; cooperation meant a working comity between industry and government to ensure efficiency, and control meant the government's ultimate responsibility to organize, through a central mechanism, a system by which efficiency and growth would be served. One could read portions of Herbert Croly's manifesto, *The Promise of American Life*, which was picked up by Teddy Roosevelt and made the philosophical basis of his Bull Moose party, and swear that the stuff was ghostwritten by Lester Thurow—even down to the call for the paring away of the antitrust laws. But Roosevelt's defeat in 1912 sent the New Nationalism into hibernation. Until now.

In economic terms, central planning becomes a way of establishing community, just as a national-service requirement meets the spiritual need for it. But what of the other side of the ledger—individualism and the free market? Like Reagan Republicans, neoliberals favor deregulation and would generally agree that the market should be left as unfettered as possible to create wealth. *New wealth* is a key term. "I think the Democrats have got to *start* with some viable, non-trickle-down growth plan," says Thurow. Bradley agrees. "If you have a growing economy, you don't have to choose between his claims on the national pie and your claims on the national pie." Hence the emphasis on research and development, especially process R and D, on tax incentives such as capital-gains–tax reductions for *new* investments, and on basic science programs. Much of the approach is lost in the arcana of tax and finance law, such as the Jorgenson-Auerbach depreciation system or the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act, but all of it is aimed at stimulating growth *first* and hastening the creation of new jobs, new products, and new wealth. The Reagan approach, they feel, chockablock with special-interest provisos, is dangerously weighted toward short-term payoffs at the expense of a long-term, productive, growth-oriented economy.

Where the neoliberals differ markedly from the Republicans is in their refusal to allow government to abdicate its role of protecting the environment and the individual from abuses of the market system. But, where possible, they would replace the economically counterproductive regulatory mechanism with a system of tax incentives. "If you have a tax on pollution," says Bradley, "then you force the companies that pollute to internalize the cost. And if someone produces the same goods without the polluting material, *they* have the advantage in the marketplace." Effluent charges (which are strongly recommended by Thurow) were incorporated by Bradley and Representative Jim Florio into their toxic-waste "Superfund" legislation of last year. A favorite Florio theme is the creation of a "market for reform."

In the long run, new jobs, new products, and new wealth rely on individual effort. Just as neoliberals would spur (as opposed to unleash) the market, so they would goad the individual into helping to create that market. "Americans have to begin to treat risk more as an opportunity and not as a threat," Bradley stresses. "There's a certain richness to betting on yourself. There's an exhilaration to working as hard as you possibly can to realize the fruits of that risk taking."

"You have to have values that encourage the entrepreneur, values that make the entrepreneur more important than the kid who goes to *law school*," says Charlie Peters, pronouncing the final two words with obvious distaste. "Ninety percent of our bright young kids of the Seventies have gone to law school or business school instead of going into something that would create a new enterprise that would make the country move again, they are going into *whoring*! I don't want," he adds, voicing a feeling generally left unexpressed by the new Democrats but still deeply sensed, "to lose to the Japanese."

It is in *this* area, probably more than any other, that neoliberals firmly believe the Reagan administration has missed the boat. The Republicans, with their revitalized cold-war mentality, have failed to address the declining tradition of American excellence, a tradition that is being challenged not by the Russians but by the Japanese and the West Germans. In terms of economics and self-esteem, our allies would seem to be our enemies.

The Neoliberal Future

Two crucial questions exist. Can the new Democrats get their act together? And can they get it together by 1984?

The neoliberals have already begun to churn out programs, platforms, and planks—of varying degrees of specificity. Some of these programs, made explicit in James Fallows's *National Defense* and in Thurow's *The Zero-Sum Society*, have had a public impact. Bill Bradley admits that he basically adopted one of Lester's ideas" for an amendment he proposed to the President's tax bill aimed at stimulating new investments. Paul Tsongas says his staff economist is "a Thurovian—if that's the word."

Two forthcoming economic packages, one devised by Bill Bradley and Timothy Wirth and another offered by Gary Hart, will incorporate many of Thurow's notions in attempting specifically to address methods of hastening the postindustrial future. One Thurovian idea, the national investment bank, was given a public go-around in its RFC guise by Felix Rohatyn, in an article in *The Economist* last September. Rohatyn also used the piece—a basic, step-by-step platform for the Democrats—to express his support for the draft. And Charlie Peters, the party's ex officio cattle prod, issued a Democratic "Platform for the Eighties" last summer, in which he called for a return to compulsory national service, tax policies to stimu-

The Neoliberal Agenda

Although neoliberals differ in their support for each plank of this platform (and support for some is not limited to the neoliberals), these ideas, taken together, form the basis of what could be termed the neoliberal agenda.

Compulsory National Service: National service promises to explode as an issue within the next couple of years, and there isn't a neoliberal who doesn't favor the concept in some form. Plans range from the strictly applied across-the-board service at age eighteen in either the military, the Peace Corps, or some other program to a radically revamped volunteer service required of anyone seeking any form of federal education assistance. The burning question: How will it be financed?

Negative Income Tax: Neoliberals believe in a massive overhaul of the American tax system; ultimately, a negative income tax or a guaranteed annual income or a national welfare system would be a part of it. Whatever it's called, the negative income tax cuts across political boundaries—staunch supporters in the early Seventies included Milton Friedman, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and Richard Nixon.

Central Economic Planning: Lester Thurow, in *The Zero-Sum Society*, calls for "the national equivalent of a corporate investment to redirect investment flows from our 'sunset' industries to our 'sunrise' industries." For problem areas, investment banker Felix Rohatyn, head of New York's Municipal Assistance Corporation, advocates a new Reconstruction Finance Corporation, a publicly capitalized body that would, in turn, attract private funds and direct that money toward reindustrialization efforts. This same approach has been advocated by the Nadenle Citizens for Tax Justice. Support from such diverse Democratic quarters virtually assures the RFC's emergence in the neoliberal platform.

Hi-Tech Industrialization: And *this* is what is meant by all the jabbering about "sunrise" and "sunset" industries. Neoliberals believe the industrial age has ended, and they would turn the country's economic resources toward fostering growth in high-technology areas: computers, communications, information. No single issue dominates the neoliberal mind-set as does this one. Neoliberals advocate tax incentives for and government funding of research and development, a strong recommitment to basic science programs, and efficient public/private-sector job retraining.

Better Defense: The first neoliberal issue to capture the public's attention was defense, and it owes much of its recognition to Gary Hart, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to James Fallowss book *National Defense*, and to Paul Tsongas, who devoted a chapter to the subject in *The Road from Here*. The message they are delivering is clear: the stress on increasingly expensive and "sophisticated" weaponry is counterproductive and dangerous. The neoliberals have also taken the lead in emphasizing the interlocking trinity of energy, economy, and defense: a series of hearings last year on "The Geopolitics of Oil," cochaired by Bill Bradley under the auspices of the Senate Energy Committee, stressed all three.

Cooperative Regionalism: Perhaps the hardest task facing the Democrats, according to Colorado congressman Tim Wirth, is figuring out what is the appropriate job of the federal government, the state governments, the local governments, and the private sector. Two competing strains pull at each other in neoliberals minds: decentralization and centralization. The Democratic party has heretofore been a force for the latter. Says John Naisbitt, chairman of the Naisbitt Group, who has advised Gary Hart: "The two great centralizing events in America's history were the Great Depression and World War Two, plus the centralizing impact of industrialization. We are now receding from these centralizing influences." Naisbitt sees the trend toward deregulation of industry, advocated by most neoliberals, as an example of decentralization.

But neoliberals view certain elements of decentralization, such as Reagan's federalism, as a potential disaster. "Federalism ... feeds a dangerous growth in regional chauvinism," wrote Michael Kinsley in a *New Republic* article, "The Withering Away of the States." "Anyone truly concerned about making America more productive—more democratic, less wasteful, less bureaucratic—would want to hasten the withering away of the states as quickly as possible."

The neoliberal resolution is a system of cooperative regionalism. Many functions appropriated by the federal government would be returned to states and localities, while others would be nationalized. Still other matters, such as worker retraining, would be taken up by regions, which instead of competing against one another would cooperate under national frameworks for energy, industrialization, et cetera. A regional tax policy such as that advocated by Felix Rohatyn would be a first step toward effecting this cooperation. —R R.

late new investments, a consolidation of welfare wedded to a guaranteed annual income with work requirements, and deregulation to stimulate true competition—a veritable neoliberal manifesto.

The significance of these platforms and programs cannot be overstated. "It'll be reasonably important to have some of these ideas floating around in the public domain for a couple of years," says Thurow. "One, because you want to wear off some of the rough edges and see what can be sold and what can't be sold. But also, simply, because if an idea's been around for a long time, it doesn't scare you."

The next step is the elevating of a Presidential candidate able to latch on to some of these programs and express the neoliberal vision. This will not be easy. The Democratic party is splintered, and any candidate who urges national service, community, internationalism, and central economic planning on the one hand and free-market individualism, deregulation and entrepreneurialism on the other is bound to run smack into each one of the interest groups that make up the Democratic coalition. Also, the Democrats still have gender and race guidelines for choosing convention delegates, and unless the party revises this approach (privately, the leaders are trying), unification around a neoliberal platform or candidate is doubtful.

But many party pros feel that the constituency is out there and can be mobilized by the articulation of the vision. "We can raise millions and millions of dollars around somebody who puts all this in a simply stated, commonsense kind of way," says Tom Mathews, cofounder of Craver, Mathews, Smith and Company of Falls Church, Virginia, the direct-mail consultant who hopes to accomplish for the new Democrats what Richard Viguerie has done for the New Right. Mathews, who ran John Anderson's surprisingly successful direct-mail fund raising effort, repeated a belief often expressed in new Democratic circles that Anderson, with his calls for a fifty-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax and for an end to American factionalism, touched a chord in the national psyche. There is a strong belief that a major-party candidate who presents himself as an uncompromising yet liberal realist will find a constituency waiting.

In a sense, this begs the question of electoral possibility. The neoliberals are so profoundly uncomfortable with partisanship that if they are unable to communicate their vision of the national interest, they are virtually assured of failure. It's a problem they steadfastly refuse to address. When asked, 'Who's your constituency?'' the legislators reply in vague terms. "There's a solid political base of people in their thirties and forties who have no spokesman" (Gary Hart) or "People under thirty who look at the future and wonder what it'll be like, and people in middle age who have been a part of the information revolution" (Bill Bradley).

Neoliberalism is rooted in a view of the baby-boomers as a majority weaned on television, comfortable with the computer age, tired of ideology, engaged in the pursuit of self-fulfillment, tolerant of others' differences, and ready to commit to a common good. Daniel Yankelovich, in his recent book *New Rules*, indicates that such a generation is coming into existence. "Survey data showing that Americans are growing less self-absorbed and better prepared to take this first step toward an ethic of commitment, though sparse, is fairly clear." Neoliberals accept Yankelovich's assumption, others are less hopeful. "They may be right about the new technology, but I don't see that it's created a new person' at all," says historian Eric Goldman. "It's like when the typewriter was invented. It created new jobs, sure, and people talked about the creation of a new person, but it never happened. People always adapt to a new technology without changing fundamentally."

Another unknown factor in neoliberal electoral politics is the power of the Tom Hayden–Mark Green–Gar Alperovitz–Democratic Socialist–Campaign for Economic Democracy crowd—loosely affiliated progressives who can be classed together as "CEDs," or believers in economic democracy. Already well organized into political-action committees and think tanks, with a seeming lock on the environmentalists, the antinuclear activists, and the young Left, the CEDs, with their vision of a decentralized socialist "people's state," present an obstacle to the success of neoliberalism. Although they agree with neoliberals on some issues, such as the need for government awareness of environmental concerns, on others they are far apart—CEDs are implacably opposed to nuclear energy, for instance, while neoliberals do not reject it. "I think there's going to be a tug-of-war for the soul of the [Democratic] party between these two groups," predicted *The New Republic*'s Mort Kondracke. "My guess is that those guys [the CEDs] will be a leg up, because they'll be able to say to the traditional interest groups of the party, 'You can have it now'" The tug-of-war may have already started, with the CEDs more prescient about the existence of neoliberalism than most of the supposedly shrewd political pundits. Tom Hayden, in his book *The American Future*, notes with distaste, "The proposal most likely to become the new center of American political thought is *economic planning*. 'Reindustrialization of America' is the current banner of those favoring a planned economy." Hayden sounds a call to arms against the new pragmatism in his book, claiming it 'would rest on a type of economic planning that would reflect the interests and participation of the large corporations, government bureaucrats, and perhaps representatives of the major unions."

Absent from the neoliberals-versus CEDs scenario are the traditional liberals. There is general if muted agreement among the new crowd that whatever the party's fortunes, the two leading contenders for the 1984 Presidential nomination are *not* capable of stating a new vision. Teddy Kennedy and Walter Mondale, states one political adviser currently working closely with the Democratic National Committee, "are paradigms of tired thinking." Gary Hart's name has been tossed around with increasing frequency, and although he has been, of necessity, playing coy, he has not been discouraging the talk. It's no secret that Robert Redford, a fellow Coloradan and a friend of Hart's who has funded him in the past, may do so again if and when Hart launches a Presidential campaign.

Which would all be a supreme irony—Hart, the man blamed by many for organizing the demise of the Democratic party as George McGovern's campaign manager, returning to lead the party on to resurgence and victory. Claiming, along with his colleagues, to be imbued with the spirit of John F. Kennedy and carrying Teddy Roosevelt's spear. Bringing back the draft.

Mutatis mutandis. Everything old is neo again. ◐

"AMERICANS HAVE TO BEGIN TO TREAT RISK MORE AS AN OPPORTUNITY AND NOT AS A THREAT," SAYS SENATOR BILL BRADLEY. "THERE'S A CERTAIN RICHNESS TO BETTING ON YOURSELF."



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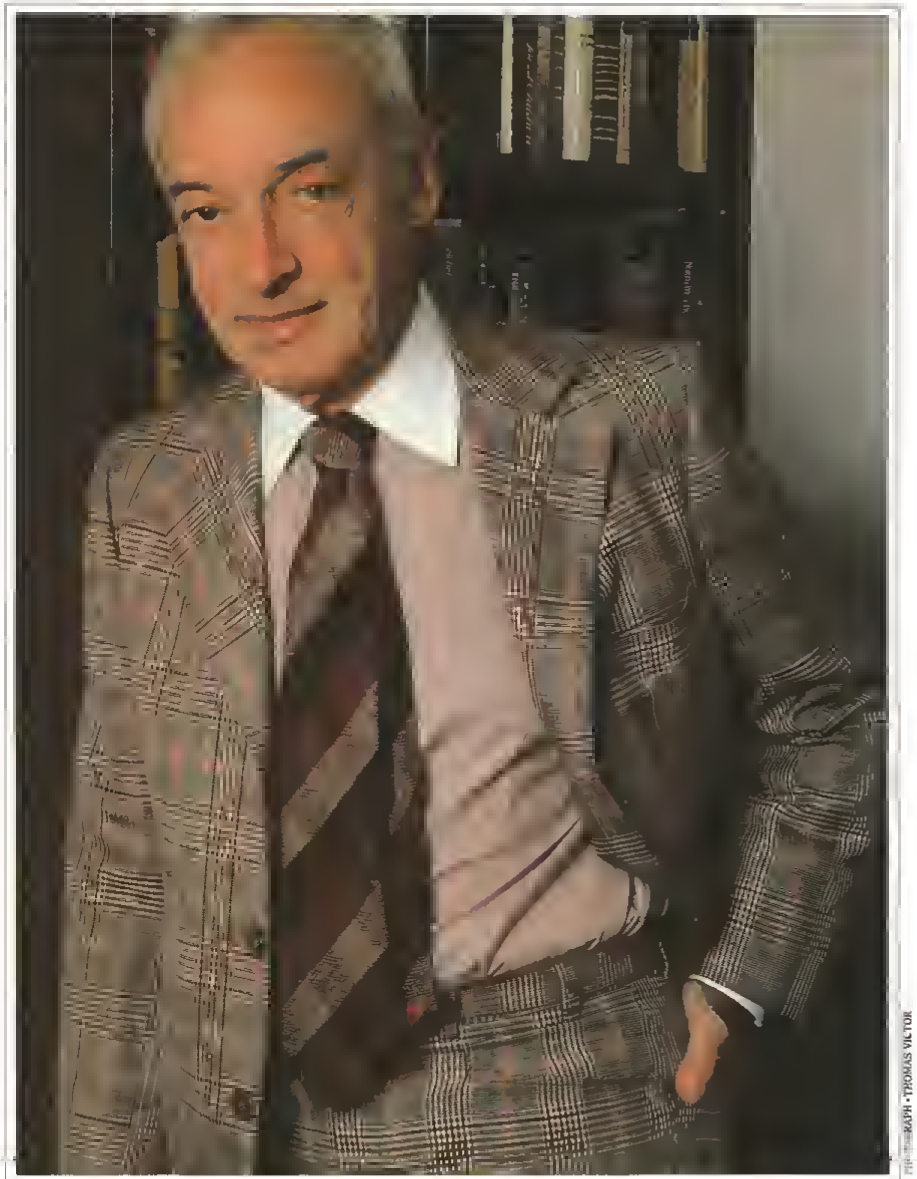
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SAUL BELLOW

If Saul Bellow Doesn't Have a True Word to Say, He Keeps His Mouth Shut

by WILLIAM KENNEDY

I'D FIRST MET SAUL BELLOW, THE AMERICAN NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATE, IN SAN JUAN IN 1960, WHEN HE WAS A VISITING PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AND IN THE MIDDLE OF WRITING *HERZOG*. HE'D HAD VALUABLE things to say about what I was then writing and had also made some observations that stayed with me: that character was the single most important element in determining a writer's worth; that a writer shouldn't be parsimonious with his work but "prodigal, like nature," which uses billions of sperm when only one is needed for creating life. (He claims he wrote *Herzog* fifteen or twenty times and lost count.)

Also, and most memorably, he said that "most American writers don't really know much about American society, for they're used to viewing it from the point of view of the innocent or the underdog. And the sources of real power in American society will never be revealed to innocents or underdogs."

Now here he came with a new book, his ninth novel, *The Dean's December*, anatomizing power and the lack of it: urban decay in a major American city. And so an interview was proposed. I hadn't kept up with all his moves and wrote him at the University of Chicago, where he's been a member of the Committee on Social Thought since 1964. The letter came back marked ADDRESSEE UNKNOWN. I posted another through his publisher and news of his unknownness reached him in Vermont, where he and his wife, Alexandra, a professor of mathematics, have been spending summers. "I'm not what you'd think of as a drifter," he wrote in reply. "But I do drift in a real (i.e., barely conscious) sense—a sort of desert rat with a Smith-Corona instead of a prospector's mule. Not even the Committee on Social Thought fully remembers me. Just as well." He said that he was just finishing the book, "something of a cherry bomb, or a small grenade, I like to think," and that he'd be glad to talk.

[illegible] of Social Thought, [illegible]

WILLIAM KENNEDY's novel Ironweed *will be published by The Viking Press this fall. Kennedy is the author of three other novels as well:* The Ink Truck, Legs, *and* Billy Phelan's Greatest Game.

out of an old rented farmhouse, came Saul Bellow, summer squire, in baggy pants and blue-and-white jogging shoes in which he does not jog. How old was he now? "Sixty-six," he said, "but showing signs of decay." His hair is sparse and white, his face lined, but he's trim for a man of these numerals if he doesn't jog in his jogging shoes, he does stand on his head in them.

"I haven't gone to seed," he said. "But seed is nibbling at my feet. You know it's on you when you've been sitting in a certain position for fifteen minutes and you can't straighten up when you arise. I stopped playing racquetball because I couldn't stay with the young people on the court anymore. There's something humiliating about that. Also women started to ask me for a game."

HE SEES A DEMONISM IN MARKETING SEX: "THE MASSES ARE GORGED ON ALL THIS SEXUAL CAKE, AND EVERYBODY'S GOT SEXUAL PIMPLES."

We ate lunch prepared by Alexandra, then moved to the living room, where his Smith-Corona sat atop a tidy desk, and we settled into facing sofas in front of the fireplace. He began the interview by talking about the new novel.

"I wrote it in a year and a half," he said, "and had no idea it was coming. One of these things that came over me. My wife's mother was dying in Bucharest, and I went with her to give her some support, which in that place one badly needs. The old mother died while we were there. I had been thinking of writing a book about Chicago, and as always when I go abroad I brooded about the home town.

"The book considers what value a single life has in one of these countries of Eastern Europe," he said. But he thinks its Chicago segments will raise the controversy. "It's a protest about the dehumanization of the blacks in big cities. I'm speaking up for the black underclass and telling the whites they're not approaching the problem correctly. The people [in the book] who stand out in moral stature, who each in his own way tries to do something, are blacks. But it's one of these touchy subjects you know will draw flack. Either the white liberals will be up in arms or the black leadership will disapprove. When I began this book, any discussion of this subject, unless it was framed in the conventional pieties, would have been taboo."

The black condition, he believes, "represents a complete failure of the imagination in the country. We are now in the fourth or fifth welfare generation, people who've never worked, people sealed out, set aside, and they look to me like a doomed population. And from the social organizations, educators, psychologists, bureaucrats—nothing, just zilch. Who's got some imagination about this? Is the city going to turn into a septic tank with people moving out and doing their work by computer and nothing in the city center but the big corporations and the blasted remains? The population is economically redundant . . ."

He stopped speaking.

"I'm using journalistic terminology. I could kick myself. You can't talk about people being economically redundant." He said that in the novel he quotes the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke, who wouldn't discuss the Great War with anybody. "He shunned all sorts of discussion," said Bellow, "because they could only be held in newspaper language, and he felt this gave him a foulness in the mouth, and you could only betray experience this way."

Bellow has worked journalistically (his own style) in the past, covering Khrushchev's visit to the United Nations for this magazine; writing a book on contemporary Israel, *To Jerusalem and Back. A Personal Account*, and a few years ago he began to face down Chicago for a nonfiction work on his home town. But that book is dead. "I'll never have any more to do with it. That's a subject for some kind of poetry, not a factual account. The very language you have to use as a journalist works against the true material. To do a piece about, say, the way the criminal courts operate in Chicago, you'd have to write about people on the bench, criminal detention, the conditions that breed crime, and you'd have to do it with a show of objectivity, and in the end it would all be dead."

Bellow turned his energy toward the novel instead and made the protagonist of *The Dean's December* (he's dean at an unnamed Chicago college) a former journalist on the Paris *Herald* who has returned to Chicago to teach. After some years, he writes two magazine articles comparing the Chicago of yore with Chicago today and the articles create a storm, which continues while he is in Bucharest visiting his wife's dying mother. The writing of the novel illustrates Bellow's profound differentiation between journalism and literature: "Although you are reading about it all the time, you can't find out what's happening in this world. You read *Encounter, Commentary, Foreign Affairs*, books by psychologists, sociologists—and you can't find out what's happening humanly. Unless you pass it through your own soul, you can't understand it. We live in this alleged age of communication, which comes in the form of distracting substitutes for reality. But the reality in our day comes from art. And we live in a country that has ruled this off limits.

"It's hard to interest readers, isn't it? They're not used to following the human motion of character. The motion of the soul is not what they consider to be exciting. The excitement demand has gone sky-high. One week the President is shot, another week the pope. This would have caused a holy war two centuries ago, but now it's only something to titillate the public's appetite for sensation. This causes people to forget human knowledge—knowledge of their own souls. Somewhere they're paying humanly for the lack of reality all this represents. They can always find something to dwarf something else with—Chicago is dwarfed by the Gulag peninsula, which is dwarfed by the Holocaust. There's a totalitarianism in all this, in that it's reductive of human experience."

This loss of the power to experience is a theme Bellow threads through *The Dean's December*. "I felt moved on behalf of the human stuff itself," he said, "and the need to recover the power to experience." As we talked, this feeling translated into an attitude toward the abundance of modern writers who have succumbed to the pop reality and gone to the movies or to thrillers or to nonfiction or to fiction that merely fulfills popular expectations. Bellow feels writers are making themselves superfluous. "They think the game is over, they think we're in a situation where all we can do is prepare for the next epoch by doing more of the same, by repeating the redundancy. That's what heats me up about it. A question that bugs me all the time is, what really is interesting? What is it human beings long to think about, read about, see, or feel? There's some sort of capitalist competition going on about what is interesting. Power is interesting now. Weakness is much less interesting. Sexuality is interesting, or at least people say it is, though they generally mean lust. All this sexual stuff has become practically obligatory, because it's certainly a big deal commercially. And there's a demonism in this sexuality because of the big money that certifies the importance, the social success of this trend. It makes me think of Marie-Antoinette: 'Let 'em eat cake.' Now the masses are gorged on all this sexual cake, and everybody's got sexual pimples."

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"I have a very simple feeling about this when I'm writing. I don't want to waste people's time. They're gasping for a breath of life and they're being robbed by every con artist who comes along. If I didn't think I was speaking to people's souls, I would not write anything. If I didn't have a true word to speak to them, I'd keep my fucking mouth shut."

OF COURSE, THERE WERE

American writers who had not succumbed to "pop reality" Which of these writers did Bellow value?

"I like [John] Cheever very much. I have a weakness for writers of my own generation—Wright Morris, J. F. Powers, Ralph Ellison, Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor among the novelists. Bernard Malamud is extraordinarily good. I liked *The Assistant* very much, and I like the stories immensely.

"I admire Norman Mailer quite a lot. I think he's a writer of immense talent, but he's lacking in originality. I know his originality takes American readers by storm, but I find him crowded with clichés. I like the improvisational ones—writing about prizefights. He's a man of remarkable talents, but his seriousness is impossible to take seriously."

What did he mean about Mailer's clichés?

"Take the recent one about the knifer [*In the Belly of the Beast*, in which Mailer introduces the letters of the convict Jack Henry Abbott]. Malraux was giving the world shudders with this kind of stuff fifty years ago, and even then it was old hat. It came from an earlier French generation of syndicalist wild men—Sorel's *Reflections on Violence*—and tons of supporting hooey way back into the nineteenth century. Wyndham Lewis is awfully good on this when he looks into Sartre and Malraux and points out how all these admirers of criminal violence came from the middle class and had the best education France could give them.

"It's literature in the worst sense of the word because it's only writing about the knife. But then comes the knife, and a life is taken [Abbott recently pleaded not guilty to a fatal stabbing]. The good old *New York Times* writes an editorial that blames the prison system. Rebecca West says that men see things in outline, silhouettes and nothing else. Women see the human details. So when there is a threat to the community or to the state, the men go for armaments and the women say these terrible things wouldn't happen if there were decent bathrooms for everybody. So *The New York Times* in this case takes the feminine attitude that this wouldn't happen if our prisons weren't so bad.

"And there's another point to be made about writers enveloped in sexual charisma—that they are drawn to violent criminals who are also sexually charismatic. Now, the criminals, I suppose, are knifing in real earnest. But the writers are in the sexual game with their violence. There is a kind of flattery of women in it."

He'd praised Cheever, now and also publicly. What was it in Cheever's work that moved him?

"He's one of the few American writers who have undergone a visible development. Take a writer like [James T.] Farrell. He wrote *Studs Lonigan* first and he wrote *Studs Lonigan* last. Most of them are that way. But here's Cheever—you read those stories and you see his power of transformation, his power to take the elements given and work them into something new and far deeper than they were at the outset. I think you can truly judge the importance of a writer by his power to transform the original given."

He'd translated Isaac Bashevis Singer's short story *Gimpel the Fool* from the Yiddish. What did he think of Singer?

"I think he's written a couple of first-rate books and some marvelous stories. He's very prolific, and sometimes he hits the target and sometimes he hits a spectator or two."

Which books of Singer's did he think were really first-rate?

"*The Magician of Lublin*, *The Spinoza of Market Street*, and *Gimpel the Fool*, the book of stories with that title. I don't think my praise will cut much ice with him. His opinion of himself is so high he doesn't need anyone else's certification."

He noted an egregious fact of American literary life: that good readers are hung up on Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Faulkner. "It's very strange that serious readers think this country has made so very little progress since then. That they formed a standard around themselves is something to be alternated with the Hemingway one—in ball parks, in newspapers, and among the younger people in universities, though not so much there anymore."

Bellow considered all that he had said to me and explained that he didn't usually make these sorts of statements. "I've never been so outspoken before about people like Mailer. It's an exhibitionistic thing to do, which amuses the public, but I'm getting old enough now not to care. I could have named lots of people. They'll never know how much they've been spared."

THIS TALK OF AMERICAN

writers led naturally into talk of writers of world stature. Whom did he judge to be of the first rank?

"One reads less as one grows older," he said. "You realize your time is limited and that you have to ration yourself. I may mention some strange birds to you. The late Nadezhda Mandelstam, for one [she was the wife of the Russian poet Osip Mandelstam]. Her two volumes, *Hope Against Hope* and *Hope Abandoned*, are very important modern books. They have a kind of personal, human intuitive, intelligent, and cultivated response to what has happened in Russia since 1917, through life and death, through war and peace. A fragile little old woman in her sixties and seventies wrote these books, which seem to me to contain the complete answer to Communist totalitarianism.

"Solzhenitsyn is a wonderful writer but a kinky one. He's chock-full of old Slavophile ideology, religiosity, to which I have no objection. Among the Russian dissenters, he belongs to the right wing, which I find fascinating but not especially sympathetic. Anyone who could stand up to the regime as he did needs heroic virtues and all kinds of special powers, and he clearly has them. But I'm not deeply moved by his novels, except the first one, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

"There's a Russian writer, Varlam Shalamov—his collection of short stories about the concentration camps, *Kolyma Tales*, is worth reading—and Andrei Sinyavsky (Abram Tertz is his pseudonym) is also an admirable writer; I think that he's a writer of genius.

"I like Rebecca West, a marvelous old broad. She's wrong about a lot of things but incomparably right when she's right." He picked up the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of *The Paris Review*, which he'd been

BELLOW ASSESSES MAILER AS "A WRITER OF IMMENSE TALENT, BUT HE'S LACKING IN ORIGINALITY.... I FIND HIM CROWDED WITH CLICHÉS."

wonder at. Its as if people were saying, that's when we were still okay—before the fall. Funny they should all be considered so American when they were so nihilistic. But they gave Americans an image they wanted to be known by. The Fitzgerald stereotype



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reading, and quoted a passage from an interview with West. She was talking about writing multiple drafts of a book and said to the interviewer: "I've never been able to do just one draft. That seems a wonderful thing. Do you know anyone who can?" And the interviewer responded: "I think D. H. Lawrence did." To which West answered: "You could often tell."

Bellow roared and took off his glasses. "A marvelous one-liner," he said. "I can tell with Lawrence where he didn't revise. There's a certain repetitiousness and silliness even in his very best things."

We talked about other writers.

"There's another old girl," he said. "Christina Stead. Her novel *The Little Hotel* I recommend strongly. I think you'll love it."

And what of Samuel Beckett, who certainly belongs in the first rank?

"I just met Beckett in Paris," Bellow said. "He's very gentle. Indrawn rather than withdrawn."

What did indrawn mean to him?

"He shows the physical tension of having removed himself inwardly to some deeper location inside. He's physically an old man, worth looking at, worth studying. There's an odd twist to him. The color of the eyes is like nothing I've ever seen. Even the growth of the hair expresses some kind of torsion—there's a twist of sorts to his constitution. It's very appealing, most attractive. His constitution has its own sort of gram."

What did Bellow and Beckett talk about?

"Literature, his life, and Joyce and Pound and Hemingway and Wyndham Lewis. He was willing to talk about them, but not enthusiastic about those conversations. He spoke with reverence of Joyce but not of many others. We met in the lobby of the Pont Royal Hotel. The bar downstairs was the headquarters of Sartre and Company all through the highest moments of existentialism, and I said: 'Do you want to go downstairs to the bar?' And he said no. He wouldn't have anything to do with that stuff. In fact, he wouldn't have anything to do with anybody's stuff, and I rather like that about him because there's something in me that's similar—the dislike of being one of the pack, any pack."

What did Bellow think of Samuel Beckett as a writer?

"He's an extraordinary writer. Not my sort. I'm not his sort either. He interests me. He doesn't stir my soul deeply. But it was a friendly meeting in which the tones counted more than what was said. The vibes, as the children would say. I was satisfied with the vibes. I can't speak for him. He's too mysterious to be spoken for."

LAST SPRING, ON THE

wall of an English department in an upstate New York university, and presumably on college walls everywhere, a document appeared announcing the creation of the *Saul Bellow Newsletter*, a publication that will pursue "Bellow materials"—bibliographies, reviews, interviews, conferences, probably gossip on the private life as well. This thrusts Bellow into the company of Joyce, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and other writers judged by academe to be newsletter-worthy icons. How did the new icon feel about this newsletter?

"I don't get it," he said. "And if I got it I wouldn't read it. Somebody told me about it, but I just stay in my foxhole."

How did he feel about books by academics analyzing his work?

"I've read few of the critical works," he said. "I don't pay too much attention to them. I always think the end is not yet, and when I see these things I think, 'Don't announce the results of the election or the people on the Coast will walk away from the polls.' Also, it is sometimes depressing to read what educated people think I'm doing, and I feel downcast for days. It can be very distressing to see how wrong people are. And then they invariably translate what you do into the modern intellectual vocabulary, which itself is depressing."

He teaches and lectures at universities but sees himself apart from academic life.

"I went back to Chicago in the Sixties because I didn't want to get caught in the literary life and its rackets. There were gangs organized in those days—the New York poets, the *Commentary* group, *The New York Review of Books* group, the people around Stanley Kunitz and Cal [Robert] Lowell—and I thought I might just as well go back to Chicago, where a spade is a spade and a philistine is a philistine. I really do prefer the untroubled vulgarity of Chicago, where, when my wife gives her name to a department-store clerk, the clerk asks, 'Bellow? Doesn't your husband swim in the Olympics?'

"As you grow older as a writer," he said, "you become more and more accustomed to talking to yourself. In what the punks like to call the literary milieu you'd think you'd find some *mitteumks* to talk to. You'd think there were heaps of people to attach yourself to. But you have to pick yourself through heaps of *no goodniks*, casts of thousands in the literary world who don't know what the hell I'm talking about."

We arrived, finally, at the subject of the Nobel Prize. It came to him in 1976, and the Swedish Academy praised his work for these reasons: first, because it represented an emancipation of American writing from the "hard-boiled" style that had become "routine" in Thirties literature, and second, for its mix of "exuberant ideas, flashing irony, hilarious comedy, and burning compassion."

Bellow's initial response to the prize was viewed by the press as casual, and I asked him about this.

"How should I behave?" he inquired.

I had no suggestions but noted that Jean-Paul Sartre, for instance, had rejected the prize in 1964, partly on political grounds.

"I don't feel it incumbent on me politically to do one thing or another," Bellow said. "I don't think the world is waiting to see how I line up. Part of me thinks back to the streets of Chicago and says, 'Who, me? Don't be silly.'

"What it is, is one of those greatest show-on-earth things, and why should I be too good to take part? So I clowned a bit and turned a few somersaults."

What has been his international role since the prize?

"I just sign more manifestos," he said. "My name has to be ignored by Brezhnev more and more often.

"I would have been quite happy without the Nobel Prize," Bellow added. "I know it upsets some men not to get it, but actually it's better to write a marvelous book than to get the prize. It's easy for me to say that, but what I mean to say is, I still go on doing my damnedest to write the best book that's in me."

Will that be difficult, now that he's become an industry?

"I don't mind becoming an industry," he said. "In Japan people go to the Buddhist temple and buy a long strip of paper with their horoscope on it, and with Japanese efficiency they roll the papers up and tie them to shrubs by the temple door, so the shrubs have more horoscopes than they do leaves. And I suppose the Saul Bellow industry makes a shrub of me by the temple door. It's all right as long as they don't come and tear off my blossoms."

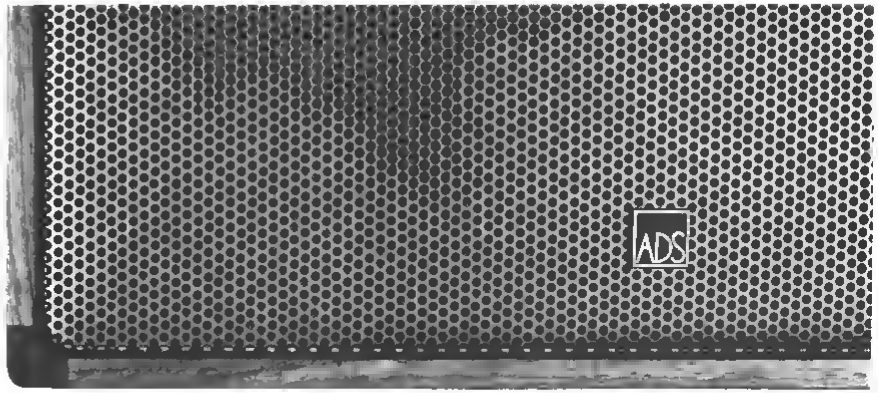
He had earlier, in passing, mentioned a vague Hollywood interest in his books. Had he ever thought of writing for the movies?

"I concentrate on the form of unreality I know best," he said. "When I was young and pretty I was fingered by a talent scout who asked me to come to Hollywood. *Dangling Man* had just come out, and I thought he wanted to buy the book for the movies. He was a member of the Goldwyn family, not a very famous member, and he hadn't even read my book. He saw my picture on the jacket and thought I could make it as an actor. Write for them? Hell, I could've acted for them."

NOW, WOULD HE, AS A WAY

of concluding this talk, compare the Bellow who wrote *The Adventures of Augie March* with the Bellow who had just finished *The Dean's December*?

"One of the things I said in the new book," he said, "was that the dean lived a very quiet life. And the reason was that he had made so many mistakes that he had a lot to think about. He had his work cut out for him. You remember when you took elementary chemistry? You were handed a lump of stuff and the professor said, 'By the end of the semester I want you to tell me what's in this.' And you had to sweat over it in the lab for what elements were in it. Well," said the author with an unfinished smile, "I haven't gotten to the bottom of my lump." ●



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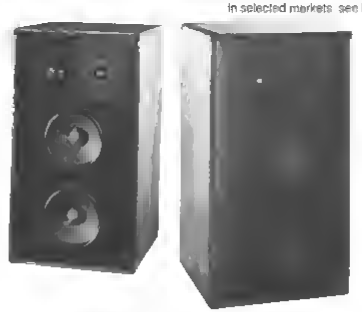
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ILLUSTRATOR Chris Foss is the acknowledged master of space art. He is best known for his fantastic paintings of space flights and alien monsters. We asked him to launch his imagination to the condo galaxies of the future and paint for us man's habitation in century 22.



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As civilizations spread throughout the universe, the demand for mineral-rich ores will outstrip conventional supplies. One readily available source of rare ores may be the surviving cores of impacted meteorites. These would be located by onboard metal detectors. A typical long-haul prospecting ship like this would range over vast distances of unsurveyed space in the outer reaches of the universe, spotting and mining the richest pickings. The ship seen here is operating in extreme weather conditions, fighting solar winds from a dying star on the horizon while attempting to recover a large, mineral-rich boulder.



Cities in Space

Man will always need staging posts, no matter how far in space he travels. The ships carrying cities may be able to travel for years on end, but sooner or later their human occupants will want to stretch their legs and enjoy more earthlike environments. Asteroids, acting as floating space stations, would provide stable carriers for the large structures. The asteroids would be devoid of all but minimal gravity and their interiors would be honeycombed by tunnels. Propelled by rocket motors, some cities might travel forever through space on these asteroids.



Traveling Cities

Settling on some planets will be a [illegible] gerous extremes in temperature. A [illegible] laid around the entire circumference of a planet [illegible] the sun. [illegible] city complexes will be assembled on these tracks [illegible] to various suns moving [illegible]

FANNY ARDANT

THIS IS A TRUE CINDERELLA story—altogether modern but without a complex. The once-upon-a-time was only last fall, at the glittering, fashionable New York Film Festival. We pick up when François Truffaut steps onstage to say a few *mots* about his latest movie, *The Woman Next Door*. Through an interpreter, the director salutes the expectant throng of *cinémaphiles:* West Side intellectuals, film students from NYU, well-dressed Beautiful People from Hollywood to Milan. He is revered. Then Truffaut gestures to the wings and out strides a tall, slender woman with raven-colored hair and a grin that fires up Lincoln Center. Fanny Ardant. *Qui?* Fanny Ardant, Truffaut's leading lady, who is here in New York for the first time and who, until a few months earlier, had never before acted in a feature film. Addressing the audience in a sort of English, she expresses her gratitude and closes by wishing that everybody enjoy *Comme ça*, the eggheads, buffs, and trendies fall head over heels. *Voilà!* Fanny Ardant is adored. The movie is a grand success.

Two days later Fanny Ardant sits by a window in her Fifth Avenue hotel. Light falls on half her face, setting on her long, exquisitely straight nose. The other half is in shadow, except for the grin that flames from cheek to cheek. She wears a lacy white blouse and black sweater, a bright print skirt, black stockings. Barrettes hold back her hair. *Très française.*

Her manner is open and direct. Ah, *non*—why be coy? Her manner is such that she laughs, exclaims, blushes, and beams on scant impulse. Her English is pretty good, too. (For best results, hear her comments as strongly accented, when she breaks out in enthusiastic French, go with it.)

"I am born in a very old family," she says, sitting with her legs crossed and one arm on the back of the sofa. "I would say the family was *bourgeoise* but we had little money. My father was in the French Army, and later we lived in Monte Carlo, and that is where I was a little girl." She studied political science at the Aix-en-Provence University, she goes on, then spent some time as a model in London. After that she enrolled in a Paris drama school. "Right away I acted in the French classical plays: Racine, Giraudoux, Claudel, Corneille, Shakespeare—*non, non,* Shakespeare *n'est pas français.*"

"And what did your father think of all this? Was he strict, like so many military men?"

"Ah, *oui.* Because I studied *la science politique,* he hoped I would work as, *comme* . . ."

"A diplomat?"

"*Oui, oui.* He does not like much the *théâtre* and the *cinéma.* He does not like the . . ." (here she makes furious circles with her hand, signifying the actor's way of life) "But I do think that parents have the right to be afraid of what their children do. And I have always been very close to my father. He is a man with the widest mind. He loves *la littérature* even though he was always in the army. He has a very great sense of humor. For both of my parents, *tous les deux,* everything in life is a *comedie.*"

Turning to politics—as they always do in French movies—the visitor asks Fanny about her opinions of the Mitterrand regime.

"Politically, I am like my father," she says with a wave. "He thinks that all of political man is pretty ridiculous. He is not very positive. *Moi aussi.* Politics makes me, ah, very angry. *En colere.* The only thing that I love about the last election of Monsieur Mitterrand was the change. Change in life is *très important.*"

"But Mitterrand, or so it seems in the U.S., is a cultured man. He reads books. He is enigmatic, almost theatrically so, the kind of person one might think would appeal to you."

"*Oui, oui, oui,*" she says breathlessly. "He is very,



PHOTOGRAPHS • SKREBNESKI HAIR JOHN VICTOR; MAKEUP • MAULIN GIVAUDAN

very clever. He is Monsieur Mitterrand, a man who can go many, many ways. He believes in *le socialisme* but, for me, there is no picture of *le socialisme* about him. In Europe, you see, politics is much more the fact of the man than the philosophy—be it 'capitalism,' or 'communism,' or 'socialism,' whichever."

"It's a matter of the leader, not the particular ideology?"

"*Voilà!* You see, politics is the only thing in life that confuses me. With politics I am a little *naive*. *Naive? Oui?* I am not entirely sure about the things that—*comment dit-on?*—are the subjects of the brain."



"Then what are you sure of?"

"I am sure about me. *Moi.*" Her dark eyes flashing, she laughs.

"And *what* are you so sure about?"

"Ah, that is a very good question but also very hard. I think...I think I have the feeling of the mad. I am never afraid about life. I am never afraid about other people. I don't know what I want to be in my life, but I feel that my life, my *schéma de vie*, is mine and mine alone."

"One gets the impression that you weren't always so sure of yourself. That when you were younger you were not as attractive or confident as you are today. That you were also very shy."

"Ah, how did you know!" she exclaims brightly. "When I was a little girl, I stay home all the time reading books. I was too tall and too skinny. Not *très jolie*. Sometime I think that the whole circle of France was closing in. But when I entered theater school I realized that onstage I could dare to do anything."

"And now you are happy?"

"Ah, *non*. I do not care about happiness," she says firmly. "Happiness is not the most important thing in life. The most important thing is to be full, to be filled up! *Énergie*. To be alive. Not to be like a dead man who gets up in the morning, goes to work, then goes to sleep."

"So now you are having your revenge against those lonely years. You are staying at a luxurious hotel with François Truffaut. You go to the best parties in New York. You walk onstage at Lincoln Center. You ride in limousines. That's more revenge than most can achieve."

"*Mais, non*, that's not revenge! It's like a dream! At every single moment I have felt that I don't have the right to these things. But"—here a smile breaks—"whenever a very big car stops in front of the hotel, I say to myself, 'Ah, this is just like in the movies.'"

"When you go back to Paris, what will you tell your friends? Will you tell them how the audience cheered? Will you describe the parties and the limousines?"

"*Non, non!* I will be too shy. Instead I will talk about what I saw on the streets. When I left Paris all the people said to me, 'Oh, Fanny, you go to Bloomingdale, go to this shop and that.' And I said, 'Oh, *non*, shopping does not interest me.' The whole time I am walking around, looking at the people on the street and in Central Park." As if to emphasize, she kicks off her shoes.

Now thirty, Fanny reveals that she got married seven years ago. The marriage lasted two years and was of little consequence except that it produced a daughter, Lumir, who now lives with her mother in a Paris apartment. Fanny denies—jabbing the air with her fist—that she will ever marry again.

"*Non*, I am too afraid of marriage," she says. "Not afraid of the other half but of myself. I do not want to be—*enfermée*, how do you say? In jail."

"But men are of great interest to you?"

"*Mais, oui!* I like men much more than I like women. Even if there is no love affair. When a man and a woman are together, there is something *magique*. Always do I think that men and women are *étrangers*. I feel it is miraculous when you can be with such a foreigner. Still, I don't want anything from a man. A lover, perhaps."

Then she describes how last year she set out by train for Venice alone, accompanied by only a long novel. When the train stopped in Lyons, she abruptly got off, checked into an ordinary hotel, and stayed in her room, finishing the book. Then she took the train back to Paris. The prospect of visiting Venice by herself was too "*mélancolique*." I always say that I will wait for money and big love before going to *Venezia*."

It was then, when she returned from Lyons, that she met Truffaut—in January of last year. She refuses to describe how and where they were introduced. But in March he cast her in *The Woman Next Door*, the story of two former lovers who reunite after seven years—each is married to someone else—and their eventual self-destruction.

She recalls that when Truffaut first told her they would be going to the film festival, she said, "I am not sure that *I* am invited but that you arranged to put me in your luggage." She says she was "afraid to be the little dog following the master."

"And do you feel that way now?"

"*Non.*"

Eventually she stands up, smooths out her skirt, extends her hand. The next day she boarded a plane and returned to Paris. There, when she walks down the street, she says, shopkeepers who recognize her from television call out, "*Bonjour, Fanny, comment ça va?*" And she returns the greeting, with a wave, without anyone stopping her for an autograph or calling out, as they do in New York, "Hey, loved ya in *The Woman Next Door*." And when she arrives home there will be no messages from William Morris. The only one waiting will be Lumir. ●

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It possessed Bill Walton, it seized his fellow Bruins, it captivated every fan who witnessed their streaks of glory: basketball that was almost perfect, men who were almost unconquerable

The Hoop Demon

BY ROBERTA SMOODIN

IN THE OLD DAYS, my days, being a Bruin fan was an easy high. The wins were plentiful, and we all became addicted to the aesthetic of basketball carried to its utmost, its zenith: perfection. By day, with hair tied back in a red bandana, patched jeans strident and colorful, I protested furiously against the war with other student multitudes, and by night went to the Bruin game to yell and scream for Keith (now Jamaal) Wilkes. It never occurred to me that the two might be paradoxical, but after all, Bill Walton went to both events too, so it must have been cool.

What was special about the UCLA Bruins was everything that was good and pure and wholesome in sport. The school's championship teams, while I was there, were criticized because they supposedly didn't have the killer instinct. The players were vegetarians, meditators. And that coach—*the* coach—Wooden with his Pyramid of Success chart, his talk of "fine Christian young men." The sports cynics couldn't take it and still can't. But the fans were as zealous as the Hare Krishnas at Los Angeles International Airport. They refer to the Bruin heroes by first names, just as the ancient Greeks knew their mythic heroes Kareem, Jamaal, Bill, Marques. Once, when driving through Westwood, I saw one of my favorite post-Walton Bruins crossing a street, looking tall, noble. I panicked, honked, yelled out my car window, "Hey, James!" James Wilkes raised an index finger to indicate "we're number one" and smiled as aware as Achilles that he was a darling of the gods.

My days at UCLA spanned the emotional gamut for a sports fan, from painful thrills, through the smuggest pleasure, through abject heartbreak—a kind of four-year group therapy/primal scream program. The 1970–71 season was the Wicks-Rowe-Patterson team, and I left every game feeling as if I'd been Rolfed. These guys were so cool they didn't want to look ostentatious, so hip they always won in the final seconds. During the first USC game of the season, the famed crosstown rivalry in full bloom, we were down by nine with nine minutes left. The UCLA side of the auditorium sat as still and trepidant as a revival meeting watching a dubious healing. We won, clearly a miracle. In the western regionals of the NCAA tournament, we beat Long Beach State by two points. In the NCAA finals, we beat Villanova 68–62, with Steve Patterson, the unlikely center, scoring twenty-nine points to pull it out.

The 1971–72 season marked the beginning of the Walton years. We won and won and won, and it looked easy, beautiful, too good to be true. In the NCAA semifinals we beat Louisville, coached by former UCLA assistant Denny Crum, 96–77, and in

ROBERTA SMOODIN *author of* Ursus Major *has appeared often in these pages. Her novel* Presto! *will be published this spring.*



PHOTOGRAPH • LARRY WILLIAMS

Bill Walton's ferocity evaporates in the hot sun, and he allows, "If I was going to do something for fun right now, I'd want to go out and play basketball."

the finals we outplayed Florida State, 81–76, even though Walton was off his game. And we knew this team could only get better—Walton, Wilkes, Lee, Curtis.

The next season, 1972–73, might seem a boring replay to the uninitiated, but Bruin fans loved it. The team scored their sixty-first straight win, breaking the record for successive wins by a college basketball team, and the win was against the hated Notre Dame Fighting Irish. The Irish had a coach in loud plaid suits and smiling face, we had a saint on our side. In the semis, we beat Indiana, 70–59, but not before a scare: they had scored seventeen straight

1972 NCAA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS



1971 was the beginning of the Walton years. We won and won and won, and it looked easy, beautiful, too good to be true. And we knew this team could only get better.

in the second half to pull within three, 54–51, with nine minutes left. In the finals, we beat Memphis State, coached by Gene Bartow, 87–66, with Walton playing like a man possessed by a hoop demon; he scored forty-four points, had thirteen rebounds, and was in foul trouble the whole second half. Momentarily I believed that basketball was the pure Buddhist high sought after by small men with shaved heads and saffron robes. How could I have known that hardly a year later this very team would break my heart?

Oh, the 1973–74 season. All calendars should be burned. It should be erased from the record books. Early in the season we beat Maryland at Pauley Pavilion, the championship banners flying, 65–64; December 1973 and already there were intimations of mortality. But then we beat North Carolina State badly that same month, 84–66, and could breathe again. We were okay after all. Then, on the hated Fighting Irish's home court, January 19, 1974, we lost to Notre Dame after being up by eleven with three minutes left, and the early-December hint of things to come became fact. Beating Notre Dame at Pauley one week later didn't matter: the streak, eighty-eight games without a loss, had been broken, and the magic had dissipated. Then came the Lost Weekend: in February our demoralized team went north to Oregon, where fans lined the courtside like untrained baboons and hometown boosters, in those days, badmouthed UCLA with an enthusiastic vitriol. The Oregon teams were nothing special that year; they posed no threat. We lost to both of them on successive nights.

We made it to the semifinals, though, through a triple overtime regional game that gave a whole generation of fans gray hair and palsied hands. But then came the blackest day in my Bruins history: the loss to North Carolina State, 80–77. In the second overtime, with three and a half minutes left, Bill Walton became imperfect, Keith Wilkes missed his sweet long shot. And the Bruins have never been the same. The only new championship banner added to the Pauley Pavilion collection was won in 1975 by a ragtag team playing on grit and determination and love for the coach more than on talent, a team out of the Bruin mold I loved, everyone loved, the game won by an all-arms-and-legs kid named Pete "Spider" Trgovich, who knew how to play basketball only when the clock ticked down to the last two minutes and some invisible fireworks went off over his head like a comic-strip character's version of a good idea. We Bruin fans yearned for the good old days.

Post-vegetarianism and post-meditation, Bill Walton lives around the block from the San Diego Zoo in palatial hippie splendor. The only basketball hoop on his estate stands about five feet off the ground, mounted on a fence for his small son, Adam, pasted on the same fence are various NBA posters, pictures of superstars and their ersatz, printed autographs. Walton limps around, lifts weights, swims, talks on the phone, fries his pale redhead's skin in the hot southern California sun, does everything, in fact, except the one thing in life that makes him absolutely happy. Walton's bones: brittle, fragile, eminently breakable, can't meet his own high standards of performance, the standards he applied in the pros after his stellar years at UCLA. His psychic brittleness made his transition from college ball to professional ball fraught with a turmoil that found outlet in radical politics and alienation. The gap between pride and mortality proved as great as the Grand Canyon, and though even now he cannot admit it, Walton, the fiercest competitor ever to pick up a basketball, will never play again.

From the outside it is impossible to judge the size of Walton's house because of all manner of barricades—fences, walls, gates with BEWARE OF DOG signs posted, even a fearsome sprinkler spraying a lawn, making entrance through a side door impossible. A sign hung on the front door, in the manner of DO NOT DISTURB signs at hotels, warns the errant visitor against noise: BABY SLEEPING. Walton has given fastidious directions to his home, but when I knock on the door, no one answers, by peering through a side window, I spy a black woman polishing a refrigerator. I tap on the window, and she looks at me as if I were the fourth vacuum-cleaner salesperson to come around that day.

"I have an appointment with Bill Walton," I say.

"Through there," she says, and points down a hallway. I walk through the kitchen, where the maid slowly, methodically works on a small circle of the refrigerator, cleaning it perfectly as if in defiance of the slovenliness apparent in the rest of the room, down the long hall toward male voices. I knew he disliked interviews. In college, Walton quickly gained a reputation for being prickly with the press and began a running feud with *Sports Illustrated*'s best writer, Curry Kirkpatrick, that was to last through his career in the pros.

When Walton played for UCLA (1971–1974), it became evident to students of the game that he was in psych city, that he could just as easily have been in an empty arena: he heard nothing but the words of his teammates and the refs' whistles, saw nothing but ball and hoop and future trajectories of the one toward the other as clearly as if the air had dotted lines traced in by top NASA engineers. The man breathed basketball. In the off-season, I'd see him on campus with his hair growing long down his back, in Royce Hall in his tattered jeans and old T-shirts, walking his enormous bike to a water fountain where he could lock it up, as if any mortal could ride away with this Titan's bicycle, I'd see him at the demonstrations shouting, "We're going to shut this university down," sitting in with the rest of us, though his head remained visibly high above all others for the FBI surveillance cameras. But once basketball season rolled around, he appeared on court with shorn hair and competitive spirit and a motley collection of visible bones, bulging joints, overgrown hands and feet like you see on Great Dane puppies. The heartbreak of the lost championship in 1974 dimmed his career only slightly in the eyes of Bruin fans: we never blame the loss of a championship on one player; instead we

PHOTOGRAPHS: NORMAN SCHINDLER

blame it on cruel fate, crueler gods, bad refereeing, anything but our heroes, whom we continue to adore through adversity. We looked forward to a stellar pro career for Big Bill. How could we have known what tragic fate lay in store for him, the series of injuries leaving him in constant pain, the ill-advised political affiliations with Jack Scott and, reputedly, the Symbionese Liberation Army, and the loss of basketball forever? Last season Walton did color commentary for the Bruin telecasts, and the enthusiasm shown by this usually defensive, taciturn man made the games even more exciting. But this also saddened me. What would become of him?

At the end of the hall, Walton and another man sit in a small, unadorned office, talking easily. Walton sits at a desk, leaning way back in his chair so that his long body appears even more attenuated. The other man looks dwarfish in his chair. Neither rises when I walk in nor pays much attention to me. Walton glances at me, then looks away. I introduce myself.

"Yeah, hi," Walton says. "This is Ernie."

I stand uneasily in the doorway, and Walton, sensing my fidgeting though he doesn't look at me, says, "It'll just be a few minutes," and goes on with business. When Walton and Ernie stand up, I have to control a quick intake of breath. Walton unfolds from the chair like an accordion, like a periscope, and he never stops. I am tall for a woman; Ernie is indeed a regular-sized man. Walton towers over us, and his body, unlike Jamaal Wilkes's racehorse slenderness, has mass, bulk, takes up space in an already crowded universe. This is the largest person I have ever seen close up, a person like a building, like a monument to sport.

He limps slightly as I follow him out to the pool. On one side, some weights and a weight-lifting machine stand as testimony to Walton's need to stay in shape, his need to believe that one day he will play again. I picture him swimming lap after lap as well: swimming doesn't place stress on those brittle bones. A little cabana stands on the other side of the pool, and Walton swiftly opens the door to it and grabs a telephone. I get a quick glimpse of a set of drums inside. Walton's instrument. For hammering away the hostility, the frustration, and I remember when he toured with the Grateful Dead during one of his many injured seasons. We sit on chaises, and he removes his shirt, the skin underneath is already reddened. His chest is bony, muscled, and he looks no older, really, than he did at UCLA, except that John Wooden wouldn't have let him keep the beard.

"I brought these," I say, and show him several old *Sports Illustrateds*. The phone rings: he does some more business while he flips through the magazines. His younger self is on four or five of the covers, Walton smiles at some of the pictures and, when he hangs up, comments cryptically.

"Yeah, Big Jim Chones," he says. "He was tough." A musing, as if talking to himself: he shuts the magazine and looks at me appraisingly, waiting for me to begin. A young woman comes out with a *Newsweek*, sits ten feet away from us by the pool, reading, she looks at me appraisingly, too.

"Why was *Sports Illustrated* always so biased against UCLA?" I ask conversationally.

"I don't really know," he says: the deep voice sounding almost slow motion, a forty-five played at thirty three rpm.

"Daddy!" a small voice yells.

Walton comes alive. "Hey, where are you? Come on out!" Then the guarded Walton again. "I don't know why *Sports Illustrated* is like that. I will say this, though: I don't remember the last championship team that didn't get on the cover." The little boy, maybe five years old, runs over, and Walton lights up again. "Hey, whattya got? Did you go and get more Star Wars cards? Show me."

"Got stickers," the little boy says.

"Now, Adam, we gotta talk here. Why don't you look at some of these," Walton says, showing the little boy the old *Sports Illustrateds* with his pictures all over them. "Look here." Walton says, and for a moment he seems to forget I'm there, and the poignance becomes powerful. "Look, Adam," he says. "Here's Jamaal and here's Greg." His face is open, his voice gentle. He looks up at me, and his face closes again.

"I heard you say that Greg Lee was the best passer ever," I say. Walton looks at me as if I'm trying to catch him in some gross indiscretion.

"That I've played with," he says, shuts up, gazes across his pool.

"Okay, what about a Bruin mystique? Was it Johnny Wooden, or what was it?"

"I don't really like that word. I don't see it as a mystique. I see it as a level of talent. We had a lot of good players on our team."

I try again. "Was it Wooden's ability as a recruiter, or did he recognize talent in individuals that other coaches didn't see?"

"No. I mean, it wasn't like the players he had on his teams weren't recruited by others. Coach, he got a lot of great players there, but in my opinion every player he got he made better. He didn't just give them the ball and say, 'Go play'" Walton sits in the sun, eyes closed beatifically.

"Larry Farmer seemed to think that one of Wooden's primary talents was that he recognized what every kid needed psychologically—that is, if he needed a father figure or someone to goad him into playing better or someone to compliment him. He saw Wooden as a shrewd judge of character. Do you feel that he recognized something in you that was special, tapped it, that you played better because of this?" My throat feels dry in the sun and hostility, and my eyes hurt from the shimmer of the pool. Walton sits on the chaise with his eyes closed, waiting. "Um, he certainly made me play better. I don't know how he did it, but I was a lot better player after going to school there." Walton does a tonal thing with his voice, making the last word of the last sentence he intends to utter on any subject waver, hang in the air, an edge to it. "Step over that line," the tone of voice seems to be saying, a small boy's dare. 'I'm bigger than you are, and I dare you to try to make me say more." All I want is for him to give me some insight into the Bill Walton who went to UCLA the same four years I did, who played his heart out while I sat in the stands screaming,

1973 NCAA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS



1972 might seem a boring replay to the uninitiated, but Bruin fans loved it. The team scored their sixty-first straight win, breaking a record for college basketball teams.

yelling his name, cheering. I tell him about our synchronized college careers. "Oh, yeah?" he says.

"Could you talk about some of the famous Wooden plays? Especially the fast break. Farmer said no one could set up the fast break like you could, with that amazing outlet pass of yours. Did Wooden teach you that?"

"No, no. Fortunately, we had a tremendous combination of players, we had great speed, and, like, Jamaal Wilkes and Larry Farmer at forward—they were downcourt before their men were, those guys, they never dropped the ball. We just had a lot of really good players on our team." He



pauses, opens his eyes, and, to my surprise, continues speaking. "You know, one thing Coach Wooden was good at was substituting."

"Yeah, I wanted to ask you about that," I say, excited. "Wooden had a lot of top talent just sitting on his bench, guys who would've been stars at other colleges. How did you feel about that?"

"It made it better," he says vaguely. "We had to play against those guys every day in practice. I played against Swen Nater every day."

"What about that 'alley-oop' play, when Lee would pass it to you over the basket. Did Wooden devise that for you?"

"No, that's something that Lee and Farmer had. Farmer invented that and I stole it from him." Miraculously, Walton laughs at this memory.

"That's an amazing leap for Farmer," I say.

"Yeah, yeah, he was a great leaper. Plus the pass was always perfect. Plus he had great timing. Then I saw Farmer do it a bunch, and I thought I'd try it. I thought it was a good play for me." The birds sing loudly around the Walton pool. Walton's wife reads quietly, the camaraderie evaporates as Walton's face once again shuts down into self-defense.

"How about the eighty-eight-game winning streak?" I ask quickly. "As a kid playing college ball, what kind of pressure did that put on you?"

"No real pressure. We didn't really play anybody that should have beat us."

"So why did you finally lose?"

"We shouldn't have lost. We beat ourselves. We had a twelve-point lead with two minutes to go and lost."

"Against Notre Dame." I rub it in. "Wasn't it a function of the way teams always psych up to play UCLA, the way beating the Bruins once would make their whole season?"

"Well, we were playing hard, too. It wasn't like we were out there, you know, just putting in our time. It's boring if you're just trying to kill time."

What about the loss of the championship your senior year? Jamaal Wilkes seemed to think that maybe everyone on the team was kind of looking ahead, thinking about the pros, that your minds weren't really on playing ball that year. What do you attribute that loss to?" I ask. The most impressive aspect of Walton the Bruin was his formidable desire to win at all costs, to put himself completely on the line when the game was at stake. Losing the championship as a senior must have killed him.

"Well, you know, we just didn't play that well." He shifts his eyes, more of the dare.

"Why?" I don't feel like letting this one go. This is important. This had broken my heart, too, and my brother's and my friends', and for the first time we had realized that UCLA wasn't invincible, that life was cruel, not just in day-to-day existence but in the fantasy land of sport as well.

Birds sing. Walton coughs, clears his throat. "If I knew why, it wouldn't have happened."

"You don't think you were looking ahead, thinking about the pros?"

"No. We just didn't have it together that day. There were times that year when it didn't come together, and I don't really know why. Those sorts of things happen. They happen more in college ball because of the lack of the twenty-four second clock. Our team did not play well in the slowdown game. With eight minutes to go, and North Carolina starting to slow it down, we just went kind of downhill."



1973: All calendars should be burned. Eighty-eight games without a loss... then Walton became imperfect; Wilkes missed his sweet long shot. And the Bruins have never been the same.

"I asked both Larry Farmer and Jamaal Wilkes about your competitive spirit, your grim determination, and the word they both used to describe you was 'ant mated.'" Surprisingly, this delights him, his face explodes into a wide, boyish grin, he chuckles, tosses his hair from his face.

"You know, I always play to win. I don't go out there to score a lot of points or to outplay my man. My goal is always to win. I'm like that in everything I do. I don't do things halfway."

"So you have an extra competitive need?"

"*Oh yeah,*" he says, one word, the most affirmative thing he's said. "I like to get work done. I like to get really into it. It's like, you know, musicians get into their music, and I get into basketball." His face goes human again. "That's what I like. If I was going to do something for fun right now I'd want to go out and play basketball."

"Do you have any favorite stories from your Bruin days?" I ask. If he wants, he can answer with a simple "No."

"You know," he begins slowly, "so many athletes in their lives and careers wish they had gone to college somewhere else. That is certainly not the case with me. I couldn't be happier with what happened to me. It could have been better. We could've won a hundred and five straight, we could've gone to the championship all three years, we should've gone, but we didn't. We had only ourselves to blame. We did beat ourselves. I'm just very, very happy and satisfied with my college career." He closes his eyes once more, appreciating the sun on his chest, the birds' songs, the fact that I will be leaving.

"Okay," I say. "Thanks a lot. How do I get out of here?" The place is enormous, gates and doors leading everywhere. He motions with his head, an inscrutable Easter Island sculpture moving.

"That way," he indicates. I pack up my antique *Sports Illustrateds*, my notes, and prepare to hit the freeways if I can find my way out, to drive back up toward Los Angeles, toward UCLA. And to meditate, on the road, about this very special team and what has become of them: Greg Lee, the nonpareil passer, getting his teaching credentials back at UCLA after years in the Italian basketball league, Tommy Curtis, intense, bandy-legged, involved in a sports foundation for underprivileged children; Walton getting a tan and brooding. Only two have remained active in the game from that amazing collection of talent, of hopes, of perfect passes: Larry Farmer, UCLA's new head coach, and Jamaal Wilkes, the quietest superstar in pro basketball.

And if lately the Bruin teams seem younger and somehow more frightened at the free-throw line than they used to be, it's probably a function of my age rather than of zeitgeist. I am older, am further away in spirit from those eighteen- and twenty-year olds than I used to be, have forgotten what it was like to empathize with being so young and carrying so much responsibility, the responsibility for the morale of a whole city. Or maybe they *are* frightened; they don't have John Wooden to bolster their egos anymore, and the tradition seems as antediluvian as the Trojan War. When I asked one of the hot freshman recruits whether that tradition, that mystique, drew him to UCLA to play his heart out, he replied, "No, I just wanna play ball in the L.A. area." I shivered and

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The Crack-Up

A desolately frank document from one for whom the salt of life has lost its savor

by F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

The Crack-Up consists of three pieces that appeared originally in the February, March and April 1936 issues of Esquire. Fitzgerald was then thirty-nine years old. He had been one of the most admired authors of the Twenties but was now neglected by critics and the public. He was broke; his wife, Zelda, had been mentally ill for years; and he was fighting a battle against alcoholism which he was only a year before his death, in 1940. *The Crack-Up* is now seen as a brilliant landmark in the history of confessional literature.

Of course all life is a process of breaking down, but the blows that do the dramatic side of the work—the big sudden blows that come, or seem to come, from outside—the ones you remember and blame things on and, in moments of weakness, tell your friends about, don't show their effect all at once. There is another sort of blow that comes from within—that you don't feel until it's too late to do anything about it, until you realize with finality that in some regard you will never be as good a man again. The first sort of breakage seems to happen quick—the second kind happens almost without your knowing it but is realized suddenly indeed.

Before I go on with this short history, let me make a general observation—the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function. One should, for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise. This philosophy fitted on to my early adult life, when I saw the improbable, the implausible, often the "impossible," come true. Life was something you dominated if you were any good. Life yielded easily to intelligence and effort, or to what proportion could be mustered of both. It seemed a romantic business to be a successful literary man—you were not ever going to be as famous as a movie star but what note you had was probably longer lived, you were never going to have the power of a man of strong political or religious convictions but you were certainly more independent. Of course within the practice of your trade you were forever unsatisfied—but I, for one, would not have chosen any other.

As the Twenties passed, with my own twenties marching a little ahead of them, my two juvenile regrets—at not being big enough (or good enough) to play football in college, and at not getting overseas during the war—resolved themselves into childish waking dreams of imaginary heroism that were good enough to go to sleep on in restless nights. The big problems of life seemed to solve themselves, and if the business of fixing them was difficult, it made one too tired to think of more general problems.

Life, ten years ago, was largely a personal matter. I must hold in balance the sense of futility of effort and the sense of the necessity to struggle; the conviction of the inevitability of failure and still the determination to "succeed"—and, more than these, the contradiction between the dead hand of the past and the high intentions of the future. If I could do this through the common ills—domestic, professional, and personal—then the ego would continue as an arrow shot from nothingness to nothingness with such force that only gravity would bring it to



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SCENES from the crack-up years, clockwise from upper left: Fitzgerald in 1936; with his wife, Zelda, in 1938; his 1934 novel; the Skyland Hotel in Hendersonville, North Carolina, where he wrote The Crack-Up; *Arnold Gingrich, founding editor of Esquire, who commissioned the articles.*

> After about an hour of solitary pillow-hugging, I began to realize that for two years my life had been a drawing on resources that I did not possess, that I had been mortgaging myself physically and spiritually up to the hilt.

earth at last.

For seventeen years, with a year of deliberate loafing and resting out in the center—things went on like that, with a new [illegible] prospection [illegible]. I was living hard, too, but: "Up to forty-nine it'll be all right," I said. "I can count on that. For a man who's lived as I have, that's all you could ask."

—And then, ten years this side of forty-nine, I suddenly realized that I had prematurely cracked.

Now a man can crack in many ways—can crack in the head, in which case the power of decision is taken from you by others or in the body, when one can but submit to the white hospital world or in the nerves. William Seabrook in an unsympathetic book tells, with some pride and a movie ending, of how he became a public charge. What led to his alcoholism, or was bound up with it, was a collapse of his nervous system. Though the present writer was not so entangled—having at the time not tasted so much as a glass of beer for six months—it was his nervous reflexes that were giving way—too much anger and too many tears.

Moreover, to go back to my thesis that life has a varying offensive, the realization of having cracked was not simultaneous with a blow but with a reprieve.

Not long before, I had sat in the office of a great doctor and listened to a grave sentence. With what, in retrospect, seems some equanimity, I had gone on about my affairs in the city where I was then living, not caring much, not thinking how much had been left undone, or what would become of this and that responsibility, like people do in books. I was well insured and anyhow I had been only a mediocre caretaker of most of the things left in my hands, even of my talent.

But I had a strong sudden instinct that I must be alone. I didn't want to see any people at all. I had seen so many people all my life—I was an average mixer, but more than average in a tendency to identify myself, my ideas, my destiny, with those of all classes that I came in contact with. I was always saving or being saved—in a single morning I would go through the emotions ascribable to Wellington at Waterloo. I lived in a world of inscrutable hostiles and inalienable friends and supporters.

But now I wanted to be absolutely alone and so arranged a certain insulation from ordinary cares.

It was not an unhappy time. I went away and there were fewer people. I found I was good-and-tired. I could lie around and was glad to, sleeping or dozing sometimes twenty hours a day and in the intervals trying resolutely not to think—instead I made lists—made lists and tore them up, hundreds of lists of cavalry leaders and football players and cities, and popular tunes and pitchers, and happy times, and hobbies and houses lived in and how many suits since I left the army and how many pairs of shoes (I didn't count the suit I bought in Sorrento that shrank, nor the pumps and dress shirt and collar that I carried around for years and never wore because the pumps got damp and grainy and the shirt and collar got yellow and starch-rotted). And lists of women I'd liked, and of the times I had let myself be snubbed by people who had not been my betters in character or ability.

—And then suddenly, surprisingly, I got better.

—And cracked like an old plate as soon as I heard the news.

That is the real end of this story. What was to be done about it will have to rest in what used to be called the "womb of time." Suffice it to say that after about an hour of solitary pillow-hugging I began to realize that for two years my life had been a drawing on resources that I did not possess, that I had been mortgaging myself physically and spiritually up to the hilt. What was the small gift of life given back in comparison to that?—when there had once been a pride of direction and a confidence in enduring independence.

I realized that in those two years, in order to preserve something—an inner hush maybe, maybe not—I had weaned myself from all the things I used to love—that every act of life from the morning toothbrush to the friend at dinner had become an effort. I saw that for a long time I had not liked people and things, but only followed the rickety old pretense of liking. I saw that even my love for those closest to me was become only an attempt to love, that my casual relations—with an editor, a tobacco seller, the child of a friend, were only what I remembered I *should* do, from other days. All in the same month I became bitter about such things as the sound of the radio, the advertisements in the magazines, the screech of tracks, the dead silence of the country—contemptuous at human softness, immediately (if secretively) quarrelsome toward hardness—hating the night when I couldn't sleep and hating the day because it went toward night. I slept on the heart side now because I knew that the sooner I could tire that out, even a little, the sooner would come that blessed hour of insomnia which, like a catharsis, would enable me to better meet the new day.

There were certain spots, certain faces I could look at. Like most midwesterners, I have never had any but the vaguest race prejudices—I always had a secret yen for the lovely Scandinavian blondes who sat on porches in St. Paul but hadn't emerged enough economically to be part of what was then society. They were too nice to be "chickens" and too quickly off the farmlands to seize a place in the sun, but I remember going round blocks to catch a single glimpse of shining hair—the bright shock of a girl I'd never know. This is urban, unpopular talk. It strays afield from the fact that in these latter days I couldn't stand the sight of Celts, English, Polonians, Strangers, Virginians, Negroes (light or dark), Hunting People, or retail clerks, and middlemen in general, all writers (I avoided writers very carefully because they can perpetuate trouble as no one else can)—and all the classes as classes and most of them as members of their class.

Trying to cling to something. I liked doctors and girl children up to the age of about thirteen and well-brought up boy children from about eight years old on. I could have peace and happiness with these few categories of people. I forgot to add that I liked old men—men over seventy, sometimes over sixty if their faces looked seasoned. I liked Katharine Hepburn's face on the screen, no matter what was said about her pretentiousness, and Miriam Hopkins's face, and old friends if I only saw them once a year and could remember their ghosts.

All rather inhuman and undernourished, isn't it? Well, that, children, is the true sign of cracking up.

It is not a pretty picture. Inevitably it was carted here and there within its frame and exposed to various critics. One of them can only be described as a person whose life makes other people's lives seem like death—even this time when she was cast in the usually unappealing role of Job's comforter. In spite of the fact that this story is over, let me append our conversation as a sort of postscript.

"Instead of being so sorry for yourself, listen—" she said. (She always says "Listen," because she thinks while she talks—*really* thinks.) So she said. "Listen. Suppose this wasn't a crack in you—suppose it was a crack in the Grand Canyon."

"The crack's in me," I said heroically.

"Listen! The world only exists in your eyes—your conception of it. You can make it as big or as small as you want to. And you're trying to be a little puny individual. By God, if I ever cracked, I'd try to make the world crack with me. Listen! The world only exists through your apprehension of it, and so it's much better to say that it's not you that's cracked—it's the Grand Canyon."

"Baby et up all her Spinoza?"

"I don't know anything about Spinoza. I know—" She spoke then, of old woes of her own, that seemed, in the telling, to have been more dolorous than mine, and how she had met them, overridden them, beaten them.

I felt a certain reaction to what she said, but I am a slow-thinking man, and it occurred to me simultaneously that of all natural forces, vitality is the incommunicable one. In days when juice came into one as an article without duty, one tried to distribute it—but always without success, to further mix metaphors, vitality never "takes." You have it or you haven't it, like health or brown eyes or honor or a baritone voice. I might have asked some of it from her, neatly wrapped and ready for home cooking and digestion, but I could never have got it—not if I'd waited around for a thousand hours with the tin cup of self-pity. I could walk from her door, holding myself very carefully like cracked crockery, and go away into the world of bitterness, where I was making a home with such materials as are found there—and quote to myself after I left her door:

"Ye are the salt of the earth. But if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?"

Matthew 5:13

Pasting It Together

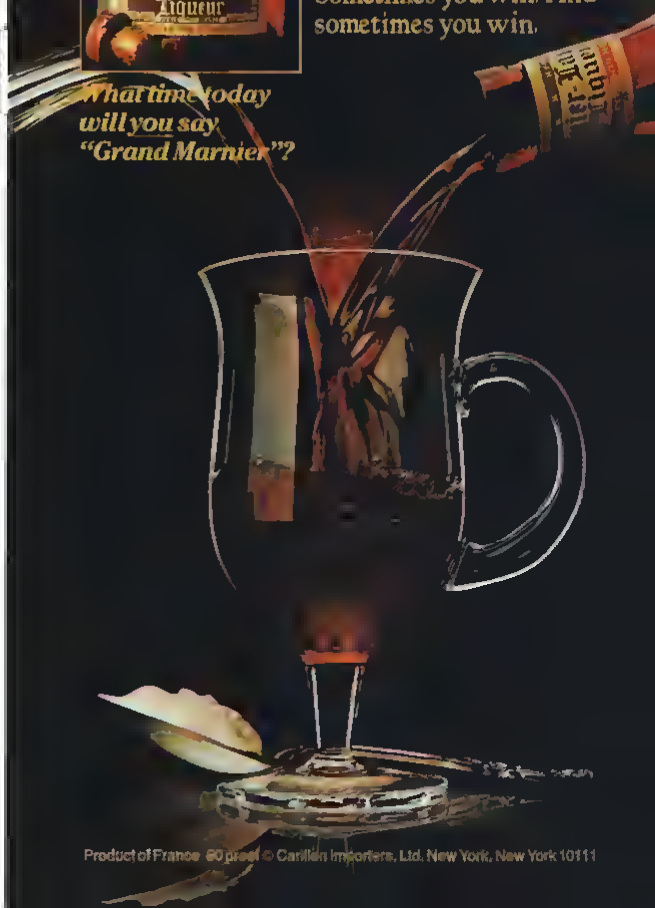
In a previous article this writer told about his realization that what he had before him was not the dish that he had ordered for his forties. In fact—since he and the dish were one, he described himself as a cracked plate, the kind that one wonders whether it is worth preserving. Your editor thought that the article suggested too many aspects without regarding them closely, and probably many readers felt the same way—and there are always those to whom all self-revelation is contempt-

11:23 P.M.

MONTE CARLO. The casino hopes you never grace their tables again. The restaurant was only too pleased to greet you to theirs. Now, it's coffee laced with Grand Marnier, sipped through cream. Sometimes you win. And sometimes you win.



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> At three o'clock in the morning, a forgotten package has the same tragic importance as a death sentence, and the cure doesn't work—and in a real dark night of the soul it is always three o'clock in the morning, day after day.

ible, unless it ends with a noble thanks to the gods for the Unconquerable Soul.

But I had been thanking the gods too long, and thanking them for nothing. I wanted to put a lament in my record without even the background of the Euganean Hills to give it color. There weren't any Euganean Hills that I could see.

Sometimes, though, the cracked plate has to be retained in the pantry, has to be kept in service as a household necessity. It can never again be warmed on the stove nor shuffled with the other plates in the dishpan, it will not be brought out for company, but it will do to hold crackers late at night or to go into the icebox under leftovers....

Hence this sequel—a cracked plate's further history.

Now the standard cure for one who is sunk is to consider those in actual destitution or physical suffering—this is an all-weather beatitude for gloom in general and fairly salutory daytime advice for everyone. But at three o'clock in the morning, a forgotten package has the same tragic importance as a death sentence, and the cure doesn't work—and in a real dark night of the soul it is always three o'clock in the morning, day after day. At that hour the tendency is to refuse to face things as long as possible by retiring into an infantile dream—but one is continually startled out of this by various contacts with the world. One meets these occasions as quickly and carelessly as possible and retires once more back into the dream, hoping that things will adjust themselves by some great material or spiritual bonanza. But as the withdrawal persists there is less and less chance of the bonanza—one is not waiting for the fade-out of a single sorrow, but rather being an unwilling witness of an execution, the disintegration of one's own personality....

Unless madness or drugs or drink come into it, this phase comes to a dead end, eventually, and is succeeded by a vacuous quiet. In this you can try to estimate what has been sheared away and what is left. Only when this quiet came to me did I realize that I had gone through two parallel experiences.

The first time was twenty years ago, when I left Princeton in junior year with a complaint diagnosed as malaria. It transpired, through an X ray taken a dozen years later, that it had been tuberculosis—a mild case, and after a few months of rest I went back to college. But I had lost certain offices, the chief one was the presidency of the Triangle Club, a musical comedy idea, and also I dropped back a class. To me college would never be the same. There were to be no badges of pride, no medals, after all. It seemed on one March afternoon that I had lost every single thing I wanted—and that night was the first time that I hunted down the specter of womanhood that, for a little while, makes everything else seem unimportant.

Years later I realized that my failure as a big shot in college was all right—instead of serving on committees, I took a beating on English poetry; when I got the idea of what it was all about, I set about learning how to write. On Shaw's principle that "if you don't get what you like, you better like what you get," it was a lucky break—at the moment it was a harsh and bitter business to know that my career as a leader of men was over.

Since that day I have not been able to fire a bad servant, and I am astonished and impressed by people who can. Some old desire for personal dominance was broken and gone. Life around me was a solemn dream, and I lived on the letters I wrote to a girl in another city. A man does not recover from such jolts—he becomes a different person and, eventually, the new person finds new things to care about.

The other episode parallel to my current situation took place after the war, when I had again overextended my flank. It was one of those tragic loves doomed for lack of money, and one day the girl closed it out on the basis of common sense. During a long summer of despair I wrote a novel instead of letters, so it came out all right, but it came out all right for a different reason. The man with the jingle of money in his pocket who married the girl a year later would always cherish an abiding distrust, an animosity, toward the leisure class—not the conviction of a revolutionist but the smoldering hatred of a peasant. In the years since then I have never been able to stop wondering where my friends' money came from, nor to stop thinking that at one time a sort of *droit du seigneur* might have been exercised to give one of them my girl.

For sixteen years I lived pretty much as this latter person, distrusting the rich, yet working for money with which to share their mobility and the grace that some of them brought into their lives. During this time I had plenty of the usual horses shot from under me—I remember some of their names—*Punctured Pride, Thwarted Expectation, Faithless, Show-off, Hard Hit, Never Again.* And after a while I wasn't twenty-five, then not even thirty-five, and nothing was quite as good. But in all these years I don't remember a moment of discouragement. I saw honest men through moods of suicidal gloom—some of them gave up and died, others adjusted themselves and went on to a larger success than mine; but my morale never sank below the level of self-disgust when I had put on some unsightly personal show. Trouble has no necessary connection with discouragement—discouragement has a germ of its own, as different from trouble as arthritis is different from a stiff joint.

When a new sky cut off the sun last spring, I didn't at first relate it to what had happened fifteen or twenty years ago. Only gradually did a certain family resemblance come through—an overextension of the flank, a burning of the candle at both ends, a call upon physical resources that I did not command, like a man overdrawing at his bank. In its impact this blow was more violent than the other two but it was the same in kind—a feeling that I was standing at twilight on a deserted range, with an empty rifle in my hands and the targets down. No problem set—simply a silence with only the sound of my own breathing.

In this silence there was a vast irresponsibility toward every obligation, a deflation of all my values. A passionate belief in order, a disregard of motives or consequences in favor of guesswork and prophecy, a feeling that craft and industry would have a place in any world—one by one, these and other convictions were swept away. I saw that the novel, which at my maturity was the strongest and supplest medium for conveying thought and emotion from one human being to another, was becoming subordinated to a mechanical and communal art that, whether in the hands of Hollywood merchants or Russian idealists, was capable of reflecting only the tritest thought, the most obvious emotion. It was an art in which words were subordinate to images, where personality was worn down to the inevitable low gear of collaboration. As long past as 1930, I had a hunch that the talkies would make even the best selling novelist as archaic as silent pictures. People still read, if only Professor Canby's book of the month—curious children nosed at the slime of Mr. Tiffany Thayer in the drugstore libraries—but there was a ranking indignity, that to me had become almost an obsession, in seeing the power of the written word subordinated to another power, a more glittering, a grosser power....

I set that down as an example of what haunted me during the long night—this was something I could neither accept nor struggle against, something which tended to make my efforts obsolescent, as the chain stores have crippled the small merchant, an exterior force, unbeatable—

(I have the sense of lecturing now, looking at a watch on the desk before me and seeing how many more minutes—)

Well, when I had reached this period of silence, I was forced into a measure that no one ever adopts voluntarily. I was impelled to think. God, was it difficult! The moving about of great secret trunks. In the first exhausted halt I wondered whether I had ever thought. After a long time I came to these conclusions, just as I write them here.

(1) That I had done very little thinking, save within the problems of my craft. For twenty years a certain man had been my intellectual conscience. That was Edmund Wilson.

(2) That another man represented my sense of the "good life," though I saw him once in a decade, and since then he might have been hung. He is in the fur business in the Northwest and wouldn't like his name set down here. But in difficult situations I have tried to think what *he* would have thought, how *he* would have acted.

(3) That a third contemporary had been an artistic conscience to me—I had not imitated his infectious style, because my own style, such as it is, was formed before he published anything, but there was an awful pull toward him when I was on a spot.

(4) That a fourth man had come to dictate my relations with other people when these relations were successful: how to do, what to say. How to make people at least momentarily happy (in opposition to Mrs. Post's theories of how to make everyone thoroughly uncomfortable with a sort of systematized vulgarity). This always confused me and made me want to go out and get drunk, but this man had seen the game, analyzed it, and beaten it, and his word was good enough for me.

(5) That my political conscience had scarcely existed for ten years save as an element of irony in my stuff. When I became again concerned with the system I should function under, it was a man much younger than myself who brought it to me, with a mixture of passion and fresh air.

> Since I could no longer fulfill the obligations that life had set for me or that I had set for myself, why not slay the empty shell?... I must continue to be a writer because that was my way of life, but I would cease to be a person.

So there was not an "I" anymore—not a basis on which I could organize my self-respect—save my limitless capacity for toil that it seemed I possessed no more. It was strange to have no self—to be like a little boy left alone in a big house, who knew that now he could do anything he wanted to do, but found that there was nothing that he wanted to do—

(The watch is past the hour and I have barely reached my thesis. I have some doubts as to whether this is of general interest, but if anyone wants more, there is plenty left, and your editor will tell me. If you've had enough, say so—but not too loud, because I have the feeling that someone, I'm not sure who, is sound asleep—someone who could have helped me to keep my shop open. It wasn't Lenin, and it wasn't God.)

Handle With Care

I have spoken in these pages of how an exceptionally optimistic young man experienced a crack-up of all values, a crack-up that he scarcely knew of until long after it occurred. I told of the succeeding period of desolation and of the necessity of going on, but without benefit of Henley's familiar heroics, 'my head is bloody but unbowed.'' For a checkup of my spiritual liabilities indicated that I had no particular head to be bowed or unbowed. Once I had had a heart but that was about all I was sure of.

This was at least a starting place out of the morass in which I floundered. "I felt—therefore I was." At one time or another there had been many people who had leaned on me, come to me in difficulties or written me from afar, believed implicitly in my advice and my attitude toward life. The dullest platitude monger or the most unscrupulous Rasputin who can influence the destinies of many people must have some individuality, so the question became one of finding why and where I had changed, where was the leak through which, unknown to myself, my enthusiasm and my vitality had been steadily and prematurely trickling away.

One harassed and despairing night I packed a briefcase and went off a thousand miles to think it over. I took a dollar room in a drab little town where I knew no one and sunk all the money I had with me in a stock of potted meat, crackers, and apples. But don't let me suggest that the change from a rather overstuffed world to a comparative asceticism was any Research Magnificent—I only wanted absolute quiet to think out why I had developed a sad attitude toward sadness, a melancholy attitude toward melancholy, and a tragic attitude toward tragedy—*why I had become identified with the objects of my horror or compassion.*

Does this seem a fine distinction? It isn't: identification such as this spells the death of accomplishment. It is something like this that keeps insane people from working. Lenin did not willingly endure the sufferings of his proletariat, nor Washington of his troops, nor Dickens of his London poor. And when Tolstoy tried some such merging of himself with the objects of his attention, it was a fake and a failure. I mention these because they are the men best known to us all.

It was dangerous mist. When Wordsworth decided that 'there hath passed away a glory from the earth,'' he felt no compulsion to pass away with it, and the Fiery Particle Keats never ceased his struggle against T.B. nor in his last moments relinquished his hope of being among the English poets.

My self-immolation was something sodden-dark. It was very distinctly not modern—yet I saw it in others, saw it in a dozen men of honor and industry since the war. (I heard you, but that's too easy—there were Marxians among these men.) I had stood by while one famous contemporary of mine played with the idea of the Big Out for half a year; I had watched when another, equally eminent, spent months in an asylum unable to endure any contact with his fellowmen. And of those who had given up and passed on I could list a score.

This led me to the idea that the ones who had survived had made some sort of clean break. This is a big word and is no

> This is what I think now: that the natural state of the sentient adult is a qualified unhappiness. I think also that in an adult the desire to be finer in grain than you are, "a constant striving," only adds to this unhappiness in the end.

parallel to a jailbreak when one is probably headed for a new jail or will be forced back to the old one. The famous "Escape" or "Run away from it all" is an excursion in a trap even if the trap includes the South Seas, which are only for those who want to paint them or sail them. A clean break is something you cannot come back from; that is irretrievable because it makes the past cease to exist. So since I could no longer fulfill the obligations that life had set for me or that I had set for myself, why not slay the empty shell who had been posturing at it for four years? I must continue to be a writer because that was my only way of life, but I would cease any attempts to be a person—to be kind, just, or generous. There were plenty of counterfeit coins around that would pass instead of these and I knew where I could get them at a nickel on the dollar. In thirty-nine years an observant eye has learned to detect where the milk is watered and the sugar is sanded, the rhinestone passed for diamond and the stucco for stone. There was to be no more giving of myself—all giving was to be outlawed henceforth under a new name, and that name was Waste.

The decision made me rather exuberant, like anything that is both real and new. As a sort of beginning there was a whole shaft of letters to be tipped into the wastebasket when I went home, letters that wanted something for nothing—to read this man's manuscript, market this man's poem, speak free on the radio, indite notes of introduction, give this interview, help with the plot of this play, with this domestic situation, perform this act of thoughtfulness or charity.

The conjurer's hat was empty. To draw things out of it had long been a sort of sleight of hand, and now, to change the metaphor, I was off the dispensing end of the relief roll forever.

The heady villainous feeling continued. I felt like the beady-eyed men I used to see on the commuting train from Great Neck fifteen years back—men who didn't care whether the world tumbled into chaos tomorrow if it spared their houses. I was one with them now, one with the smooth articles who said:

"I'm sorry but business is business." Or:

"You ought to have thought of that before you got into this trouble." Or:

"I'm not the person to see about that."

And a smile—ah, I would get me a smile. I'm still working on that smile. It is to combine the best qualities of a hotel manager, an experienced old social weasel, a headmaster on visitors' day, a colored elevator man, a pansy pulling a profile, a producer getting stuff at half its market value, a trained nurse coming on a new job, a body vender in her first rotogravure, a hopeful extra swept near the camera, a ballet dancer with an infected toe, and of course the great beam of loving kindness common to all those from Washington to Beverly Hills who must exist by virtue of the contorted pan.

The voice too—I am working with a teacher on the voice. When I have perfected it the larynx will show no ring of conviction except the conviction of the person I am talking to. Since it will be largely called upon for the elicitation of the word "Yes," my teacher (a lawyer) and I are concentrating on that, but in extra hours I am learning to bring into it that polite acerbity that makes people feel that far from being welcome they are not even tolerated and are under continual and scathing analysis at every moment. These times will of course not coincide with the smile. This will be reserved exclusively for those from whom I have nothing to gain, old worn-out people or young struggling people. They won't mind—what the hell, they get it most of the time anyhow.

But enough. It is not a matter of levity. If you are young and you should write asking to see me and learn how to be a somber literary man writing pieces upon the state of emotional exhaustion that often overtakes writers in their prime—if you should be so young and fatuous as to do this, I would not do so much as acknowledge your letter, unless you were related to someone very rich and important indeed. And if you were dying of starvation outside my window, I would go out quickly and give you the smile and the voice (if no longer the hand) and stick around till somebody raised a nickel to phone for the ambulance, that is if I thought there would be any copy in it for me.

I have now at last become a writer only. The man I had persistently tried to be became such a burden that I have "cut him loose" with as little compunction as a Negro lady cuts loose a rival on Saturday night. Let the good people function as such—let the overworked doctors die in harness, with one week's "vacation" a year that they can devote to straightening out their family affairs, and let the underworked doctors scramble for cases at one dollar a throw; let the soldiers be killed and enter immediately into the Valhalla of their profession. That is their contract with the gods. A writer need have no such ideals unless he makes them for himself, and this one has quit. The old dream of being an entire man in the Goethe-Byron-Shaw tradition, with an opulent American touch, a sort of combination of J. P. Morgan, Topham Beauclerk, and St. Francis of Assisi, has been relegated to the junk heap of the shoulder pads worn for one day on the Princeton freshman football field and the overseas cap never worn overseas.

So what? This is what I think now: that the natural state of the sentient adult is a qualified unhappiness. I think also that in an adult the desire to be finer in grain than you are, "a constant striving" (as those people say who gain their bread by saying it), only adds to this unhappiness in the end—that end that comes to our youth and hope. My own happiness in the past often approached such an ecstasy that I could not share it even with the person dearest to me but had to walk it away in quiet streets and lanes with only fragments of it to distill into little lines in books—and I think that my happiness, or talent for self-delusion or what you will, was an exception. It was not the natural thing but the unnatural—unnatural as the Boom; and my recent experience parallels the wave of despair that swept the nation when the Boom was over.

I shall manage to live with the new dispensation, though it has taken some months to be certain of the fact. And just as the laughing stoicism which has enabled the American Negro to endure the intolerable conditions of his existence has cost him his sense of the truth—so in my case there is a price to pay. I do not any longer like the postman, nor the grocer, nor the editor, nor the cousin's husband, and he in turn will come to dislike me, so that life will never be very pleasant again, and the sign *Cave Canem* is hung permanently just above my door. I will try to be a correct animal though, and if you throw me a bone with enough meat on it I may even lick your hand. ●

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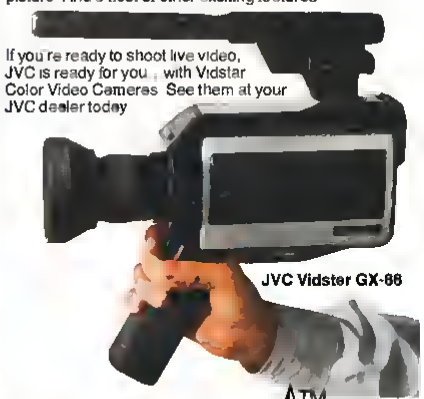
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by Vincent Boucher

MEN'S FASHION FROM THE CONTINENT THIS SPRING FAVORS THE RELAXED AND THE UNPRETENTIOUS. EXCITEMENT COMES FROM SURPRISING COMBINATIONS, SURE CRAFTSMANSHIP, AND MORE THAN A LITTLE SAVOIR FAIRE. IN PARIS AND MILAN, THE FRONT-RUNNING DESIGNERS OPENED THEIR WORKROOM DOORS AND OFFERED US A GLIMPSE OF THE BEST OF THEIR LATEST.



PHOTOGRAPHS—KEN FROST

Giorgio Armani

The virtuoso Milanese designer, whose rigorously shaped suits and sport jackets redefined tailored clothing as both modern and sexy a few seasons back, now offers an apparent contradiction. Armani shakes things up with an irrepressible mélange of bright colors and exotic prints, taking the edge off serious business wear. One version (above) that sums up the Armani brassiere attitude is worn by his menswear associate, Leo Dellorco. To wit: A heavy linen tattersall sport jacket teamed with subtly mismatched light weight linen trousers and a snap-front oiled cotton casual vest—all worn over a geometric print cotton shirt and signature knit tie. Another outfit (right) pairs two styles of stripes in a multicolored collarless, lightweight cotton shirt and dark blue cotton tone on tone shorts. Items from Armani's Italian collection, Giorgio Armani Couture, at Barney's, New York, Ultimo, Chicago, Macy's and Wilkes Bashford, San Francisco; Mayfield, Los Angeles.







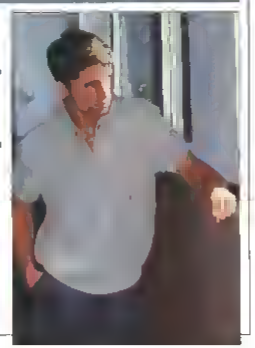
Missoni

Generous shapes, extravagant textures, and unequaled coloring continue to distinguish Missoni sweaters as special works of art. The latest knit and sportswear collection—produced by Rosita Missoni (above), center, her husband, Tai, and their entire family, including sons Luca, top left, and Vittorio, lower right—emphasizes soft seagoing shades of blue, green, coral, and ivory in sublime linen, cotton, and silk blends. Standouts include, clockwise from top left, the checkerboard pattern sweater vest, the deep toned striped linen shirt, a roughly textured, irregularly striped reversible cardigan, and a richly colored V-neck sweater. All are worn with lightweight cotton or slub-surfaced silk and wool trousers. Also notable (left): The tone-on-tone jacquard sweater and an elegant T-shirt. Items from the Missoni collection at Bloomingdales and Charivari, New York; Bullocks Wilshire, Los Angeles; Bonwit Teller, Chicago, Garfinckel's, Washington, D.C.; Neiman-Marcus, Dallas.

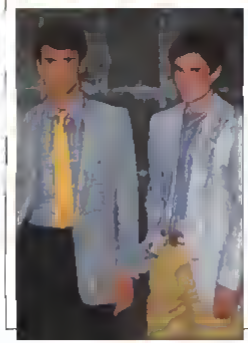


Basile

An invigorating crispness and an unlikely juxtaposition of materials are Luciano Soprani's unique contribution in his first men's collection for the Milanese design house Basile. Crispness comes from the palette: black, white, gray, and umber, with bold blue and yellow accents. New combinations often mix suede, linen, and cotton in an ensemble of interchangeable parts. For example, as pictured above, charcoal-gray morning-stripe cotton trousers and Bermuda shorts worn alternately with a white linen sport jacket and a linen shirt or a cotton blouson with a bright button-out lining that becomes a vest. The final layer is the gray suede vest on Soprani's shoulder. Another winning variation (right): The pale suede knit-collar pullover shirt. Items from the Basile collection at Barney's and B. Altman & Co., New York; Jimmy's, Brooklyn; Macy's and Wilkes Bashford, San Francisco; Theobore Max, Beverly Hills, Maxfield, Los Angeles; Ultimo, Chicago.







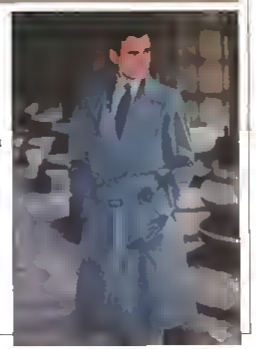
Gianni Versace

Although precise and architectural, Versace's collection is luxurious in its execution and replete with appealing detail. Deep-toned Mediterranean blues and reds bring new sophistication to sportswear in butter soft leather, linen and cotton. Jackets and shirts incorporate loose fabric panels that suggest sails, while trousers display uncommon geometric seaming. Two examples of Versace's vision (above): A collarless shirt in striped cotton worn with full-legged khaki trousers and a multicolor sweater wrapped Milanese style at the waist, and the elegant leather sail blouson jacket teamed with striped linen trousers and a dark lightweight wool sweater. For a dressier look (left), Versace mixes black and white linen Prince of Wales plaids of different sizes in shirts and sport jackets worn together. Items from the Gianni Versace collection at Gianni Versace boutiques, Coconut Grove, Florida, and Houston, Ultimo, Chicago; Barney's, New York; Maxfield, Los Angeles



Cerruti 1881

Speak of impeccable tailored clothing, and the name Nino Cerruti must be mentioned. Yet Cerruti stands for innovation as well, and in his recent collections he has forged a wearable and attractive synthesis of tailored clothing and functional sportswear. He has broken new ground in his latest European collection, Cerruti 1881. Consider these two offerings (above), both of which boast intelligent fabric mixes. First, a sport jacket of brown cotton poplin and suede, loosely constructed with an inner drawstring to add shape at the waist, worn over poplin pants and a cool white open-weave knit T-shirt. Second, a casual nautical jacket in glazed cotton with poplin insets and coordinated sport trousers. For business (right), Cerruti's choice is a lightweight wool suit and a zip-front updated trench coat. Items from Cerruti 1881 at Madonna Man, Los Angeles; Weinstein's, New Orleans; Barney's, Charivari, and Madonna, New York; Ultimo, Chicago







Marcel Lassance

Given that his background is in textile design, it's no surprise that Lassance's collections emphasize discerning fabric choice and coloration. His novel fabrics, combined with his fastidious attention to detail, elevate wardrobe essentials to collector's items. This spring the Lassance collection from Paris ranges from neo-colonial safari chics to neoclassic suits and short coats. Two important ideas (above) are his trench coat, subtly restyled and darkly colored in waterproof nubby raw silk, and his oversized anorak in an unusual fabric that combines linen and wool. The anorak tops off a sport jacket of the same lightweight fabric, a cotton knit shirt, and linen trousers. Another spring day (left) might call for a nonchalant striped cotton blazer, cotton poplin trousers, and a linen shirt. Items from the Marcel Lassance collection at Marshall Field & Co., Chicago; Hardware, Los Angeles; Madonna and Barney's, New York; Macy's, San Francisco; Apropos, Santa Ana, California

ROCK SPRINGS

EVEN THE SIMPLEST OF DREAMS CAN RECEDE BEFORE A MAN, UNTIL IT BECOMES AS MAGICALLY ELUSIVE AS A POT OF GOLD AT A RAINBOW'S END

by Richard Ford

EDNA AND I HAD STARTED DOWN FROM KALISPELL HEADing for Tampa–St. Pete, where I still had some friends from the old glory days who wouldn't turn me in to the police. I had managed to scrape with the law in Kalispell over several bad checks—which is a prison crime in Montana. And I knew Edna was already looking at her cards and thinking about a move, since it wasn't the first time I'd been in law scrapes in my life. She herself had already had her own troubles, losing her kids and keeping her ex-husband, Danny, from breaking in her house and stealing her things while she was at work, which was really why I had moved in in the first place, that and needing to give my little daughter, Cheryl, a better shake in things.

I don't know what was between Edna and me, just beached by the same tides when you got down to it. Though love has been built on frailer ground than that, as I well know. And when I came in the house that afternoon, I just asked her if she wanted to go to Florida with me, leave things where they sat, and she said, "Why not? My datebook's not that full."

Edna and I had been a pair eight months, more or less man and wife, some of which time I had been out of work, and some when I'd worked at the dog track as a lead-out and could help with the rent and talk sense to Danny when he came around. Danny was afraid of me because Edna had told him I'd been in prison in Florida for killing a man once, though that wasn't true. I had once been in jail in Tallahassee for stealing tires and had gotten into a fight on the county farm where a man had lost his eye. But I hadn't done the hurting, and Edna just wanted the story worse than it was so Danny wouldn't act crazy and make her have to take her kids back, since she had made a good adjustment to not having them, and I already had Cheryl with me. I'm not a violent person and would never put a man's eye out, much less kill someone. My former wife, Helen, would come all the way from Waikiki Beach to testify to that. We never had violence, and I believe in crossing the street to stay out of trouble's way. Though Danny didn't know that.

But we were half down through Wyoming, going toward I-80 and feeling good

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ILLUSTRATION-MICHEL GUIRÉ VARA

about things, when the oil light flashed on in the car I'd stolen, a sign I knew to be a bad one.

I'd gotten us a good car, a cranberry Mercedes I'd stolen out of an ophthalmologist's lot in Whitefish, Montana. I stole it because I thought it would be comfortable over a long haul, because I thought it got good mileage, which it didn't, and because I'd never had a good car in my life, just old Chevy junkers and used trucks back from when I was a kid swamping citrus with Cubans.

The car made us all high that day. I ran the windows up and down, and Edna told us some jokes and made faces. She could be lively. Her features would light up like a beacon and you could see her beauty, which wasn't ordinary. It all made me giddy, and I drove clear down to Bozeman then straight on through the park to Jackson Hole. I rented us the bridal suite in the Quality Court in Jackson and left Cheryl and her little dog, Duke, sleeping while Edna and I drove to a rib barn and drank beer and laughed till after midnight.

It felt like a whole new beginning for us, bad memories left behind and a new horizon to build on. I got so worked up I had a tattoo done on my arm that said FAMOUS TIMES, and Edna bought a Bailey hat with an Indian feather band and a little turquoise-and-silver bracelet for Cheryl, and we made love on the seat of the car in the Quality Court parking lot just as the sun was burning up on the Snake River, and everything seemed then like the end of the rainbow.

It was that very enthusiasm, in fact, that made me keep the car one day longer instead of driving it into the river and stealing another one, like I should have done and *had* done before.

Where the car went bad there wasn't a town in sight or even a house, just some low mountains maybe fifty miles away or maybe a hundred, a barbed-wire fence in both directions, hardpan prairie, and some hawks sailing through the evening air seizing insects.

I got out to look at the motor, and Edna got out with Cheryl and the dog to let them have a pee by the car. I checked the water and checked the oil stick, and both of them said perfect.

"What's that light mean, Earl?" Edna said. She had come and stood by the car with her hat on. She was just sizing things up for herself.

"We shouldn't run it," I said. "Something's not right in the oil."

She looked around at Cheryl and Little Duke, who were peeing on the hardtop side by side like two little dolls, then out at the mountains, which were becoming black and lost in the distance. "What're we doing?" she said. She wasn't worried yet, but she wanted to know what I was thinking about.

"Let me try it again," I said.

"That's a good idea," she said, and we all got back in the car.

When I turned the motor over, it started right away and the red light stayed off and there weren't any noises to make you think something was wrong. I let it idle a minute, then pushed the accelerator down and watched the red bulb. But there wasn't any light on, and I started wondering if maybe I hadn't dreamed I saw it, or that it had been the sun catching an angle off the window chrome, or maybe I was scared of something and didn't know it.

"What's the matter with it, Daddy?" Cheryl said from the back seat. I looked back at her, and she had on her turquoise bracelet and Edna's hat set back on the back of her head and that little black-and-white Heinz dog on her lap. She looked like a little cowgirl in the movies.

"Nothing, honey, everything's fine now," I said.

"Little Duke tinkled where I tinkled," Cheryl said, and laughed.

"You're two of a kind," Edna said, not looking back. Edna was usually good with Cheryl, but I knew she was tired now. We hadn't had much sleep, and she had a tendency to get cranky when she didn't sleep. "We oughta ditch this damn car first chance we get," she said.

"What's the first chance we got?" I said, because I knew she'd been at the map.

"Rock Springs, Wyoming," Edna said with conviction. "Thirty miles down this road."

She pointed out ahead. I had wanted all along to drive the car into Florida like a big success story. But I knew Edna was right about it, that we shouldn't take crazy chances. I had kept thinking of it as my car and not the ophthalmologist's, and that was how you got caught in these things.

"Then my belief is we ought to go to Rock Springs and negotiate ourselves a new car," I said. I wanted to stay upbeat, like everything was panning out right.

"That's a great idea," Edna said and she leaned over and kissed me hard on the mouth.

"That's a great idea," Cheryl said. "Let's pitil on out of here right now."

THE SUNSET THAT DAY I REMEMBER as being the prettiest I'd ever seen. Just as it touched the rim of the horizon, it all at once fired the air into jewels and red sequins the precise likes of which I had never seen before and haven't seen since. The West has it all over everywhere for sunsets, even Florida, where it's supposedly flat but where half the time trees block your view.

"It's cocktail hour," Edna said after we'd driven awhile. "We ought to have a drink and celebrate something." She felt better thinking we were going to get rid of the car. It certainly had dark troubles and was something you'd want to put behind you.

Edna had out a whiskey bottle and some plastic cups and was measuring levels on the glove box lid. She liked drinking, and she liked drinking in the car, which was something you got used to in Montana, where it wasn't against the law, where, though, strangely enough, a bad check would land you in Deer Lodge Prison for a year.

"Did I ever tell you I once had a monkey?" Edna said, setting my drink on the dashboard where I could reach it when I was ready. Her spirits were already picked up. She was like that, up one minute and down the next.

"I don't think you ever did tell me that," I said. "Where were you then?"

"Missoula," she said. She put her bare feet on the dash and rested the cup on her breasts. "I was waitressing at the Amvets. It was before I met you. Some guy came in one day with a monkey. A spider monkey. And I said, just to be joking, 'I'll roll you for that monkey.' And the guy said, 'Just one roll?' And I said, 'Sure.' He put the monkey down on the bar, picked up the cup, and rolled out boxcars. I picked it up and rolled out three fives. And I just stood there looking at the guy. He was just some guy passing through, I guess a vet. He got a strange look on his face—I'm sure not as strange as the one I had—but he looked kind of sad and surprised and satisfied all at once. I said, 'We can roll again.' But he said, 'No, I never roll twice for anything.' And he sat and drank a beer and talked about one thing and another for a while, about nuclear war and building a stronghold somewhere up in the Bitterroot, whatever it was, while I just watched the monkey, wondering what I was going to do with it when the guy left. And pretty soon he got up and said 'Well, goodbye, Clipper', that was this monkey's name, of course. And then he left before I could say anything. And the monkey just sat on the bar all that night. I don't know what made me think of that, Earl. Just something weird. I'm letting my mind wander."

"That's perfectly fine," I said. I took a drink of my drink. "I'd never own a monkey," I said after a minute. "They're too nasty. I'm sure Cheryl would like a monkey, though, wouldn't you, honey?" Cheryl was down on the seat playing with Little Duke. She used to talk about monkeys all the time then. "What'd you ever do with that monkey?" I said, watching the speedometer. We were having to go slower now because the red light kept fluttering on. And all I could do to keep it off was go slower. We were going maybe thirty-five and it was an hour before dark, and I was hoping Rock Springs wasn't far away.

"You really want to know?" Edna said. She gave me a quick, sharp glance, then looked back at the empty desert as if she was brooding over it.

"Sure," I said. I was still upbeat. I figured *I* could worry about breaking down and let other people be happy for a change.

"I kept it a week," she said. She seemed gloomy all of a sudden, as if she saw some aspect of the story she had never seen before. "I took it home and back and forth to the Amvets on my shifts. And it didn't cause any trouble. I fixed a chair up for it to sit on, back of the bar, and people liked it. It made a nice little clicking noise. We changed its name to Mary because the bartender figured out it was a girl. Though I was never really comfortable with it at home. I felt like it watched me too much. Then one day a guy came in, some guy who'd been in Vietnam, still wore a fatigue coat. And he said to me, 'Don't you know that a monkey'll kill you? It's got more strength in its fingers than you got in your whole body.' He said people had been killed in Vietnam by monkeys, bunches of them marauding while you were asleep, killing you and covering you with leaves. I didn't believe a word of it, except that when I got home and got undressed I started looking over across the room at Mary on her chair in the dark watching me. And I got the creeps. And after a while I got up and went out to the car, got a length of clothesline wire, and came back in and wired her to the doorknob through her little silver collar, and went back and tried to sleep. And I guess I must've slept the sleep of the dead—though I don't remember it—because when I got up I found Mary had topped off her chair back and hanged herself on the wire line. I'd made it too short."

Edna seemed badly affected by that story and slid low in the seat so she couldn't see out over the dash. "Isn't that a shameful story, Earl, what happened to that poor little monkey?"

"I see a town! I see a town!" Cheryl started yelling from the back seat and right up Little Duke started yapping and the whole car fell into a racket. And sure enough she had seen something I hadn't, which was Rock Springs, Wyoming, at the bottom of a long hill, a little glowing jewel in the desert with I-80 running on the north side and the black desert spread out behind.

"That's it, honey," I said. "That's where we're going. You saw it first."

"We're hungry," Cheryl said. "Little Duke wants some fish, and I want spaghetti." She put her arms around my neck and hugged me.

"Then you'll just get it," I said. "You can have anything you want. And so can Edna and so can Little Duke." I looked over at Edna, smiling, but she was staring at me with eyes that were fierce with anger. "What's wrong?" I said.

"Don't you care anything about that awful thing that happened to me?" she said. Her mouth was drawn tight, and her eyes kept cutting back at Cheryl and Little Duke, as if they had been tormenting her.

"Of course I do," I said. 'I thought that was an awful thing." I didn't want her to be unhappy. We were almost there, and pretty soon we could sit down and have a real meal without thinking somebody might be hunting us.

"You want to know what I did with that monkey?" Edna said.

"Sure I do," I said.

She said, "I put her in a green garbage bag, put it in the trunk of my car, drove to the dump, and threw her in the trash." She was staring at me darkly, as if the story meant something to her that was real important but that only she could see and that the rest of the world was a fool for.

"Well, that's horrible," I said. "But I don't see what else you could do. You didn't mean to kill it. You'd have done it differently if you had. And then you had to get rid of it, and I don't know what else you could have done. Throwing it away might seem unsympathetic to somebody, probably, but not to me. Sometimes that's all you can do, and you can't worry about what somebody else thinks." I tried to smile at her, but the red light was staying on if I pushed the accelerator at all, and I was trying to gauge if we could coast to Rock Springs before the car gave out completely. I looked at Edna again. "What else can I say?" I said.

"Nothing," she said, and stared back at the dark highway. "I should've known that's what you'd think. You've got a character that leaves something out, Earl. I've known that a long time."

"And yet here you are," I said. "And you're not doing so bad. Things could be a lot worse. At least we're all together here."

"Things could always be worse," Edna said. "You could go to the electric chair tomorrow."

"That's right," I said. "And somewhere somebody probably will. Only it won't be you."

"I'm hungry," said Cheryl. "When're we gonna eat? Let's find a motel. I'm tired of this. Little Duke's tired of it too."

Where the car stopped rolling was some distance from the town, though you could see the clear outline of the interstate in the dark with Rock Springs lighting up the sky behind. You could hear the big tractors hitting the spacers in the overpass, revving up for the climb to the mountains. I shut off the lights.

"What're we going to do now?" Edna said irritably, giving me a bitter look.

"I'm figuring it," I said. "It won't be hard, whatever it is. You won't have to do anything."

"I'd hope not," she said, and looked the other way.

Across the road and across a dry wash a hundred yards was what looked like a huge mobile-home town, with a factory or a refinery of some kind lit up behind it and in full swing. There were lights on in a lot of the mobile homes, and there were cars moving along an access road that ended near the freeway overpass a mile the other way. The lights in the mobile homes seemed friendly to me, and I knew right then what I should do.

"Get out," I said, and opened my door.

"Are we walking?" Edna said.

"We're pushing," I said.

"I'm not pushing," Edna said, and reached up and locked her door.

"All right," I said. "Then you just steer."

'You pushing us to Rock Springs, are you, Earl? It doesn't look like it's more than about three miles," Edna said.

"I'll push," Cheryl said from the back.

"No, hon. Daddy'll push. You just get out with Little Duke and move out of the way."

Edna gave me a threatening look, just as if I'd tried to hit her. But when I got out she slid into my seat and took the wheel, staring angrily ahead straight into the cottonwood scrub.

'Edna can't drive that car," Cheryl said from out in the dark. "She'll run it in the ditch."

"Yes, she can, hon. Edna can drive it as good as I can. Probably better."

"No, she can't," Cheryl said. "No, she can't either." And I thought she was about to cry, but she didn't.

I told Edna to keep the ignition on so it wouldn't lock up and to steer into the cottonwoods with the parking lights on so she could see. And when I started, she steered it straight off into the trees, and I kept pushing until we were twenty yards into the cover and the tires sank in the soft sand and nothing at all could be seen from the road.

"Now where are we?" she said, sitting at the wheel. Her voice was tired and hard, and I knew she could have put a good meal to use. She had a sweet nature, and I recognized that this wasn't her fault but mine. Only I wished she could be more hopeful.

"You stay right here and I'll go over to that trailer park and call us a cab," I said.

"What cab?" Edna said, her mouth wrinkled as if she'd never heard anything like that in her life.

'There'll be cabs," I said, and tried to smile at her. "There's cabs everywhere."

"What're you going to tell him when he gets here? Our stolen car broke down and we need a ride to where we can steal another one? That'll be a big hit, Earl."

"I'll talk," I said. "You just listen to the radio for ten minutes and then walk on out to the shoulder like nothing was suspicious. And you and Cheryl act nice. She doesn't need to know about this car."

"Like we're not suspicious enough already, right?" Edna looked up at me out of the lighted car. "You don't think right, did you know that, Earl? You think the world's stupid and you're smart. But that's not how it is. I feel sorry for you. You might've

been something, but things just went crazy someplace."

I had a thought about poor Danny. He was a vet and crazy as a shit-house mouse, and I was glad he wasn't in for all this. "Just get the baby in the car," I said, trying to be patient. "I'm hungry like you are."

"I'm tired of this," Edna said. "I wish I'd stayed in Montana."

"Then you can go back in the morning," I said. "I'll buy the ticket and put you on the bus. But not till then."

"Just get on with it, Earl," she said, slumping down in the seat, turning off the parking lights with one foot and the radio on with the other.

THE MOBILE-HOME COMMUNITY was as big as any I'd ever seen. It was attached in some way to the plant that was lighted up behind it, because I could see a car once in a while leave one of the trailer streets, turn in the direction of the plant, then go slowly into it. Everything in the plant was white, and you could see that all the trailers were painted white and looked exactly alike. A deep hum came out of the plant, and I thought as I got closer that it wouldn't be a location I'd ever want to work in.

I went right to the first trailer where there was a light and knocked on the metal door. Kids' toys were lying in the gravel around the little wood steps, and I could hear talking on TV that suddenly went off. I heard a woman's voice talking, and then the door opened wide.

A large Negro woman with a wide, friendly face stood in the doorway. She smiled at me and moved forward as if she was going to come out, but she stopped at the top step. There was a little Negro boy behind her peeping out from behind her legs, watching me with his eyes half closed. The trailer had that feeling that no one else was inside, which was a feeling I knew something about.

"I'm sorry to intrude," I said. "But I've run up on a little bad luck tonight. My name's Earl Middleton."

The woman looked at me, then out into the night toward the freeway as if what I had said was something she was going to be able to see. "What kind of bad luck?" she said, looking down at me again.

"My car broke down out on the highway," I said. "I can't fix it myself, and I wondered if I could use your phone to call for help."

The woman smiled down at me knowingly. "We can't live without cars, can we?"

"That's the honest truth," I said.

"They're like our hearts," she said firmly, her face shining in the little bulb light that burned beside the door. "Where's your car situated?"

I turned and looked over into the dark, but I couldn't see anything because of where we'd put it. "It's over there," I said.

"You can't see it in the dark."

"Who all's with you now?" the woman said. "Have you got your wife with you?"

"She's with my little girl and our dog in the car," I said. "My daughter's asleep or I would have brought them."

"They shouldn't be left in that dark by themselves," the woman said, and frowned. "There's too much unsavoriness out there."

"The best I can do is hurry back," I said. I tried to look sincere, since everything except Cheryl being asleep and Edna being my wife was the truth. The truth is meant to serve you if you'll let it, and I wanted it to serve me. "I'll pay for the phone call," I said. "If you'll bring the phone to the door I'll call from right here."

The woman looked at me again as if she was searching for a truth of her own, then back out into the night. She was maybe in her sixties but I couldn't say for sure. "You're not going to rob me, are you, Mr. Middleton?" she said, and smiled like it was a joke between us.

"Not tonight," I said, and smiled a genuine smile. "I'm not up to it tonight. Maybe another time."

"Then I guess Terrel and I can let you use our phone with Daddy not here, can't we, Terrel? This is my grandson, Terrel Junior. Mr. Middleton." She put her hand on the boy's head and looked down at him. "Terrel won't talk. Though if he did he'd tell you to use our phone. He's a sweet boy." She opened the screen for me to come in.

The trailer was a big one with a new rug and a new couch and a living room that expanded to give the space of a real house. Something good and sweet was cooking in the kitchen, and the trailer felt like it was somebody's comfortable new home instead of just temporary. I've lived in trailers, but they were just snail backs with one room and no toilet, and they always felt cramped and unhappy—though I've thought maybe it might've been me that was unhappy in them.

There was a big Sony TV and a lot of kids' toys scattered on the floor. I recognized a Greyhound bus I'd gotten for Cheryl. The phone was beside a new leather recliner, and the Negro woman pointed for me to sit down and call and gave me the phone book. Terrel began fingering his toys, and the woman sat on the couch while I called, watching me and smiling.

There were three listings for cab companies, all with one number different. I called the numbers in order and didn't get an answer until the last one, which answered with the name of the second company. I said I was on the highway beyond the interstate and that my wife and family needed to be taken to town and I would arrange for a tow later. While I was giving the location, I looked up the name of a tow service to tell the driver in case he asked.

When I hung up, the Negro woman was sitting looking at me with the same look she had been staring with into the dark, a look that seemed to want truth. She was smiling, though. Something pleased her and I reminded her of it.

"This is a very nice home," I said, resting in the recliner, which felt like the driver's seat of the Mercedes and where I'd have been happy to stay.

"This isn't *our* house, Mr. Middleton," the Negro woman said. "The company owns these. They give them to us for nothing. We have our own home in Rockford, Illinois."

"That's wonderful," I said.

"It's never wonderful when you have to be away from home, Mr. Middleton, though we're only here three months, and it'll be easier when Terrel Junior begins his special school. You see, our son was killed in the war, and his wife ran off without Terrel Junior. Though you shouldn't worry. He can't understand us. His little feelings can't be hurt." The woman folded her hands in her lap and smiled in a satisfied way. She was an attractive woman and had on a blue-and-pink floral dress that made her seem bigger than she could've been, just the right woman to sit on the couch she was sitting on. She was good nature's picture, and I was glad she could be, with her little brain-damaged boy, living in a place where no one in his right mind would want to live a minute. "Where do *you* live, Mr. Middleton?" she said politely, smiling in the same sympathetic way.

"My family and I are in transit," I said. "I'm an ophthalmologist, and we're moving back to Florida, where I'm from. I'm setting up practice in some little town where it's warm year-round. I haven't decided where."

"Florida's a wonderful place," the woman said. "I think Terrel would like it there."

"Could I ask you something?" I said.

"You certainly may," the woman said. Terrel had begun pushing his Greyhound across the front of the TV screen, making a scratch that no one watching the set could miss. "Stop that, Terrel Junior," the woman said quietly. But Terrel kept pushing his bus on the glass, and she smiled at me again as if we both understood something sad. Except I knew Cheryl would never damage a television set. She had respect for nice things, and I was sorry for the lady that Terrel didn't. "What did you want to ask?" the woman said.

"What goes on in that plant or whatever it is back there beyond these trailers, where all the lights are on?"

"Gold," the woman said, and smiled.

"It's what?" I said.

"Gold," the Negro woman said, smiling as she had for almost all the time I'd been there. "It's a gold mine."

"They're mining gold back there?" I said, pointing.

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"Every night and every day," she said, smiling in a pleased way.

"Does your husband work there?" I said.

"He's the assayer," she said. "He controls the quality. He works three months a year, and we live the rest of the time at home in Rockford. We've waited a long time for this. We've been happy to have our grandson, but I won't say I'll be sorry to have him go. We're ready to start our lives over." She smiled broadly at me and then at Terrel, who was giving her a spiteful look from the floor. "You said you had a daughter," the Negro woman said. "And what's her name?"

"Irma Cheryl," I said. "She's named for my mother."

"That's nice," she said. "And she's healthy, too. I can see it in your face." She looked at Terrel Junior with pity.

"I guess I'm lucky," I said.

"So far you are," she said. "But children bring you grief, the same way they bring you joy. We were unhappy for a long time before my husband got his job in the gold mine. Now, when Terrel starts to school, we'll be kids again." She stood up. "You might miss your cab, Mr. Middleton," she said, walking toward the door, though not to be forcing me out. She was too polite. "If *we* can't see your car, the cab surely won't be able to."

"That's true," I said, and got up off the recliner, where I'd been so comfortable. "None of us have eaten yet, and your food makes me know how hungry we probably all are."

"There are fine restaurants in town, and you'll find them," the Negro woman said. "I'm sorry you didn't meet my husband. He's a wonderful man. He's everything to me."

"Tell him I appreciate the phone," I said. "You saved me."

"You weren't hard to save," the woman said. "Saving people is what we were all put on earth to do. I just passed you on to whatever's coming to you."

"Let's hope it's good," I said, stepping back into the dark.

"I'll be hoping. Mr. Middleton, Terrel and I will both be hoping."

I waved to her as I walked out into the darkness toward the car where it was hidden in the night.

THE CAB HAD ALREADY ARRIVED when I got there. I could see its little red and green roof lights all the way across the dry wash, and it made me worry that Edna was already saying something to get us in trouble, something about the car or where we'd come from, something that would cast suspicion on us. I thought, then, how I never planned things well enough. There was always a gap between my plan and what happened, and I only responded to things as they came along and hoped I wouldn't get in trouble. I was an offender in the laws eyes. But I always *thought* differently, as if I weren't an offender and had no intention of being one—which was the truth. But as I read on a napkin once, between the idea and the act a whole kingdom lies. And I had a hard time with my acts, which were oftentimes offender's acts, and my ideas, which were as good as the gold they mined there where the bright lights were blazing.

"We're waiting for you, Daddy," Cheryl said when I crossed the road. "The taxicab's already here."

"I see hon." I said, and gave Cheryl a big hug. The cabdriver was sitting in the driver's seat having a smoke with the lights on inside. Edna was leaning against the back of the cab between the taillights, wearing her Bailey hat. "What'd you tell him?" I said when I got close.

"Nothin'," she said. "What's there to tell?"

"Did he see the car?"

She glanced over in the direction of the trees where we had hid the Mercedes. Nothing was visible in the darkness, though I could hear Little Duke combing around in the underbrush tracking something, his little collar tinkling. "Where're we going?" she said. "I'm so hungry I could pass out."

"Edna's in a terrible mood," Cheryl said. "She already snapped at me."

"We're tired, honey," I said. "So try to be nicer."

"She's never nice," Cheryl said.

"Run go get Little Duke," I said. "And hurry back."

"I guess *my* questions come last here, right?" Edna said.

I put my arm around her. "That's not true," I said.

"Did you find somebody over there in the trailers you'd rather stay with? You were gone long enough."

"That's not a thing to say," I said. "I was just trying to make things look right, so we don't get put in jail."

"So *you* don't, you mean," Edna said and laughed a little laugh I didn't like hearing.

"That's right. So I don't," I said. "I'd be the one in Dutch." I stared out at the big, lighted assemblage of white buildings and white lights beyond the trailer community, plumes of white smoke escaping up into the heartless Wyoming sky, the whole company of buildings looking like some unbelievable castle, humming away in a distorted dream. "You know what all those buildings are there?" I said to Edna, who hadn't moved and who didn't really seem to care if she ever moved anymore ever.

"No. But I can't say it matters, 'cause it isn't a motel and it isn't a restaurant," she said.

"It's a gold mine," I said, staring at the gold mine, which, I knew now from walking to the trailer, was a greater distance from us than it seemed, though it seemed huge and near, up against the cold sky. I thought there should've been a wall around it with guards instead of just the lights and no fence. It seemed as if anyone could go in and take what they wanted, just the way I had gone up to that woman's trailer and used the telephone, though that obviously wasn't true.

Edna began to laugh then. Not the mean laugh I didn't like, but a laugh that had something caring behind it, a full laugh that enjoyed a joke, a laugh she was laughing the first time I laid eyes on her, in Missoula in the Eastgate bar in 1979, a laugh we used to laugh together when Cheryl was still with her mother and I was working steady at the track and not stealing cars or passing bogus checks to merchants. A better time all around. And for some reason it made me laugh just hearing her, and we both stood there behind the cab in the dark, laughing at the gold mine in the desert, me with my arm around her and Cheryl out rustling up Little Duke and the cabdriver smoking in the cab and our stolen Mercedes-Benz, which I'd had such hopes for in Florida, stuck up to its axle in sand, where I'd never get to see it again.

"I always wondered what a gold mine would look like when I saw it," Edna said, still laughing, wiping a tear from her eye.

"Me too," I said. "I was always curious about it."

"We're a couple of fools, ain't we, Earl?" she said, unable to quit laughing completely. "We're two of a kind."

"It might be a good sign, though," I said.

"How could it be?" she said. "It's not our gold mine. There aren't any drive-up windows." She was still laughing.

"We've seen it," I said, pointing. "That's it right there. It may mean we're getting closer. Some people never see it at all."

"In a pig's eye, Earl," she said. "You and me see it in a pig's eye."

And she turned and got into the cab to go.

THE CABDRIVER DIDN'T ASK ANYthing about our car or where it was, to mean he'd noticed something queer. All of which made me feel like we had made a clean break from the car and couldn't be connected with it until it was too late, if ever. The driver told us a lot about Rock Springs while he drove, that because of the gold mine a lot of people had moved there in just six months, people from all over, including New York, and that most of them lived out in the trailers. Prostitutes from New York City, who he called 'B-girls," had come into town, he said, on the prosperity tide, and Cadillacs with New York plates cruised the little streets every night, full of Negroes with big hats who ran the women. He told us that everybody who got in his cab now wanted to know where the women were, and when he got our call he almost didn't come because some of the trailers were brothels operated by the mine for engineers and computer people away from home. He said he got tired of running back and forth out there just for vile business. He said that *60 Minutes* had even done a program about Rock Springs and that a blowup had resulted in Cheyenne, though nothing could be done unless the prosperity left town. "It's prosperity's fruit," the driver said. "I'd rather be poor, which is lucky for me."

He said all the motels were sky-high, but since we were a family he could show us a nice one that was affordable. But I told him we wanted a first rate place where they took animals, and the money didn't matter because we had had a hard day and wanted to finish on a high note. I also knew that it was in the little nowhere places that the police look for you and find you. People I'd known were always being arrested in cheap hotels and tourist courts with [illegible] in Holiday Inns or Travelodges.

I asked him to drive us to the middle of town and back out again so Cheryl could see the train station, and while we were there I saw a pink Cadillac with New York plates and a TV aerial being driven slowly by a Negro in a big hat down a narrow street where there were just bars and a Chinese restaurant. It was an odd sight, nothing you could ever expect.

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"There's your pure criminal element," the cabdriver said, and seemed sad. "I'm sorry for people like you to see a thing like that. We've got a nice town here, but there're some that want to ruin it for everybody. There used to be a way to deal with trash and criminals, but those days are gone forever."

"You said it," Edna said.

"You shouldn't let it get *you* down," I said to the cabdriver. "There's more of you than them. And there always will be. You're the best advertisement this town has. I know Cheryl will remember you and not *that* man, won't you, honey?" But Cheryl was asleep by then, holding Little Duke in her arms on the taxi seat.

The driver took us to the Ramada Inn on the interstate, not far from where we'd broken down. I had a small pain of regret as we drove under the Ramada awning that we hadn't driven up in a cranberry-colored Mercedes but instead in a beat-up old Chrysler taxi driven by an old man full of complaints. Though I knew it was for the best. We were better off without that car, better, really, in any other car but that one, where the signs had turned bad.

I registered under another name and paid for the room in cash so there wouldn't be any questions. On the line where it said "Representing" I wrote "ophthalmologist" and put "M.D." after the name. It had a nice look to it, even though it wasn't my name.

When we got to the room, which was in the back where I'd asked for it, I put Cheryl on one of the beds and Little Duke beside her so they'd sleep. She'd missed dinner, but it only meant she'd be hungry in the morning, when she could have anything she wanted. A few missed meals don't make a kid bad. I'd missed a lot of them myself and haven't turned out completely bad.

"Let's have some fried chicken," I said to Edna when she came out of the bathroom. "They have good fried chicken at the Ramadas, and I noticed the buffet was still up. Cheryl can stay right here, where it's safe, till we're back."

"I guess I'm not hungry anymore," Edna said. She stood at the window staring out into the dark. I could see out the window past her some yellowish foggy glow in the sky. For a moment I thought it was the gold mine out in the distance lighting the night, though it was only the interstate.

"We could order up," I said. "Whatever you want. There's a menu on the phone book. You could just have a salad."

"You go ahead," she said. "I've lost my hungry spirit." She sat on the bed beside Cheryl and Little Duke and looked at them in a sweet way and put her hand on Cheryl's cheek just as if she'd had a fever. "Sweet little girl," she said. "Everybody loves you."

"What do you want to do?" I said. "I'd like to eat. Maybe *I'll* order up some chicken."

"Why don't you do that?" she said. "It's your favorite." And she smiled at me from the bed.

I sat on the other bed and dialed room service. I asked for chicken, garden salad, potato, and a roll, plus a piece of hot apple pie and ice tea. I realized I hadn't eaten all day. When I put down the phone I saw that Edna was watching me, not in a hateful way or a loving way, just in a way that seemed to say she didn't understand something and was going to ask me about it.

"When did watching me get so entertaining?" I said, and smiled at her. I was trying to be friendly. I knew how tired she must be. It was after nine o'clock.

"I was just thinking how much I hated being in a motel without a car that was mine to drive. Isn't that funny? I started feeling like that last night when that purple car wasn't mine. That purple car just gave me the willies, I guess, Earl."

"One of those cars *outside* is yours," I said. "Just stand right there and pick it out."

"I know," she said. "But that's different, isn't it?" She reached and got her blue Bailey hat, put it on her head, and set it way back like Dale Evans. She looked sweet. "I used to like to go to motels, you know," she said. "There's something secret about them and free—I was never paying, of course. But you felt safe from everything and free to do what you wanted because you'd made the decision to be there and paid that price, and all the rest was the good part. Fucking and everything, you know." She smiled at me in a good-natured way.

"Isn't that the way this is?" I said. I was sitting on the bed, watching her, not knowing what to expect her to say next.

"I don't guess it is, Earl," she said, and stared out the window. "I'm thirty-two and I'm going to have to give up on motels. I can't keep that fantasy going anymore."

"Don't you like this place?" I said, and looked around at the room. I appreciated the modern paintings and the lowboy bureau and the big TV. It seemed like a plenty nice enough place to me, considering where we'd been already.

"No, I don't," Edna said with real conviction. "There's no use in my getting mad at you about it. It isn't your fault. You do the best you can for everybody. But every trip teaches you something. And I've learned I need to give up on motels before some bad thing happens to me. I'm sorry."

"What does that mean?" I said, because I really didn't know what she had in mind to do, though I should've guessed.

"I guess I'll take that ticket you mentioned," she said, and got up and faced the window. "Tomorrow's soon enough. We haven't got a car to take me anyhow."

"Well, that's a fine thing," I said, sitting on the bed, feeling like I was in a shock. I wanted to say something to her, to argue with her, but I couldn't think what to say that seemed right. I didn't want to be mad at her, but it made me mad.

"You've got a right to be mad at me, Earl," she said, "but I don't think you can really blame me." She turned around and faced me and sat on the windowsill, her hands on her knees. Someone knocked on the door. I just yelled for them to set the tray down and put it on the bill.

"I guess I *do* blame you," I said. I was angry. I thought about how I could have disappeared into that trailer community and hadn't, had come back to keep things going, had tried to take control of things for everybody when they looked bad.

"Don't. I wish you wouldn't," Edna said, and smiled at me like she wanted me to hug her. "Anybody ought to have their choice in things if they can. Don't you believe that, Earl? Here I am out here in the desert where I don't know anything, in a stolen car, in a motel room under an assumed name, with no money of my own, a kid that's not mine, and the law after me. And I have a choice to get out of all of it by getting on a bus. What would you do? I know exactly what you'd do."

"You think you do," I said. But I didn't want to get into an argument about it and tell her all I could've done and didn't do. Because it wouldn't have done any good. When you get to the point of arguing, you're past the point of changing anybody's mind, even though it's supposed to be the other way, and maybe for some classes of people it is, just never mine.

Edna smiled at me and came across the room and put her arms around me where I was sitting on the bed. Cheryl rolled over and looked at us and smiled, then closed her eyes, and the room was quiet. I was beginning to think of Rock Springs in a way I knew I would always think of it, a low-down city full of crimes and whores and disappointments, a place where a woman left me, instead of a place where I got things on the straight track once and for all, a place I saw a gold mine.

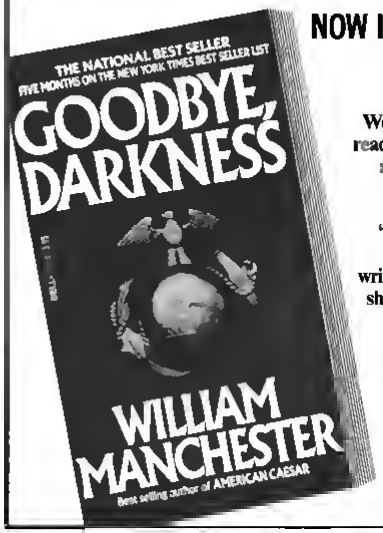
"Eat your chicken, Earl," Edna said. "Then we can go to bed. I'm tired, but I'd like to make love to you anyway. None of this is a matter of not loving you, you know that."

SOMETIME LATE IN THE NIGHT, after Edna was asleep, I got up and walked outside into the parking lot. It could've been anytime because there was still the light from the interstate frosting the low sky and the big red Ramada sign humming motionlessly in the night and no light at all in the east to indicate it might be morning. The lot was full of cars all nosed in, most of them with suitcases strapped to their roofs and their trunks weighed down with belongings the people were taking someplace, to a new home or a vacation resort in the mountains. I had laid in bed a long time after Edna was asleep, watching the Atlanta Braves on cable television, trying to get my mind off how I'd feel when I saw that bus pull away the next day, and how I'd feel when I turned around and there stood Cheryl and Little Duke and no one to see about them but me alone, and that the first thing I had to do was get hold of some automobile and get the plates switched, then get them some breakfast and get us all on the road to Florida, all in the space of probably two hours, since that Mercedes would certainly look less hid in the daytime than the night, and word travels fast. I've always taken care of Cheryl myself as long as I've had her with me. None of the women ever did; most of them didn't even seem to like her, though they took care of me in a way so that I could take care of her. And I knew that once Edna left, all that was going to get harder. Though what I wanted most to do was not think about it just for a little while, try to let my mind go limp so it could be strong for the rest of what there was. I thought that the difference between a successful life and an unsuccessful one, between me at that moment and all the people who owned the cars that were nosed in to their proper places in the lot, maybe between me and that woman out in the trailers by the gold mine, was how well you were able to put things like this out of your mind and not be bothered by them, and maybe, too, by how many troubles like this one you had to face in a lifetime. Through luck or design they had all faced fewer troubles, and by their own characters. They forgot them faster. And that's what I wanted for me. Fewer troubles, fewer memories of trouble.

I walked over to a car, a Pontiac with Ohio tags, one of the ones with bundles and suitcases strapped to the top and a lot more in the trunk, by the way it was riding. I looked inside the driver's window. There were maps and paperback books and sunglasses and the little plastic holders for cans that hang on the window wells. And in the back there were kids' toys and some pillows and a cat box with a cat sitting in it staring up at me like I was the face of the moon. It all looked familiar to me, the very same things I would have in my car if I had a car. Nothing seemed surprising, nothing different. Though I had a funny sensation at that moment and turned and looked up at the windows along the back of the Ramada Inn. All were dark except two. Mine and another one. And I wondered, because it seemed funny, what would you think a man was doing if you saw him in the middle of the night looking in the windows of cars in the parking lot of the Ramada Inn? Would you think he was trying to get his head cleared? Would you think he was trying to get ready for a day when trouble would come down on him? Would you think his girlfriend was leaving him? Would you think he had a daughter? Would you think he was anybody like you? ●

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BY TAKI

DYING WELL IS THE BEST REVENGE

As you conduct your last moments, remember: Posterity's watching



ILLUSTRATION • BILL SANDERSON

NOTHING IS capable of raising one's posthumous status more than the way one faces those last few moments before meeting what W C Fields called the fellow in the bright nightgown. Take for example the case of Charles I A rather weak man, he nevertheless firmly believed in his divine right to rule and didn't give a hoot what people thought. However, at two o'clock in the afternoon of January 30, 1649, he wore two shirts so that no involuntary shiver of cold should falsely indicate fear of his impending beheading. On that particular day, he took extraordinary care to convey the right public image

Yet another king, Louis XVI, the gentle, naive, indecisive cuckold, acted most uncharacteristically in the face of death In front of the multitude surrounding the guillotine, Louis proclaimed his innocence, forgave his killers, and prayed that "the blood which you are going to spill will never fall on France.' He then stepped unflinchingly toward the executioner and bent down with the firmness he should have shown during his rule It was noblesse oblige at its best. After all, if a king doesn't show class while dying, who will?

A lifelong reputation of grandeur and dignity can be forever tarnished by one's last moments, so it is not surprising that people will go to great lengths to make sure they have the right kind of death. The Japanese considered a warrior's death the best possible form (Before an important battle Japanese officers drank and celebrated their lucky opportunity to have a dignified and glorious end, then they washed themselves and changed their underwear) The English gentleman, on the other hand, thinks that death through drunkenness is the only way to go.

Suicide can be tricky It can be extremely low-life and vulgar, but it can also be chic Take the case of Mithridates The great king of Pontus was a giant of a man who claimed descent from Darius and Seleucus He thought the Romans were nothing but regimented farm laborers At the age of sixty-eight, he was about to cross the Danube River and teach the Romans a sharp lesson when his own troops, led by his son Pharnacea, revolted That was too much for an honorable man. One can withstand desertion by allies, by friends, by women (one expects it from the latter), but not by one's son When the venal Pharnaces turned against his father, Mithridates stopped his campaign and decided to kill himself How does a great king go about it? Easy He ordered an underling to stab him with a sword

Yukio Mishima, the greatest Japanese writer, in my opinion, died by his own hand in the noble manner of the samurai. On November 25, 1970, at noon, he took over the office of the commander of Japan's eastern military headquarters For ten minutes he addressed some one thousand soldiers in the courtyard below He urged the troops to rise up and compel the government to give in to the army. He told them that they should revive the samurai spirit and defend the sacred traditions of the country He then went inside, knelt down, opened up the front of his uniform, thrust a dagger into his stomach and across his abdomen, in accordance with the ritual of hara-kiri. Then a disciple chopped Mishima's head off with a long sword The writer was forty-five years old and reportedly had just handed his tetralogy to his publishers the morning before.

Some heroes have ended life pitiably Imagine how much greater Napoleon might seem if he had been killed by the charge of the Prussians instead of by the cancer that got him nearly six miserable years later on St Helena Or consider Napoleon's faithful Marshal Ney After charging against the English guns all day on June 16, 1815, at the head of his cavalry and having three horses shot from under him, he ended up being executed by those syphilitic Bourbons for being a Bonapartist.

Let us now look at famous men who fumbled one inch away from Hades's goal line Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, survived countless Pyrrhic victories only to be killed in a night skirmish in the streets of Argos Legend has it that Aeschylus was killed by a tortoise dropped on his bald head by an eagle. Louis VI died when a pig ran under his horse, causing it to throw him, Charles VIII of France, going to play indoor tennis struck his head a death dealing blow against the lintel.

Modern tycoons are notorious for the humiliation of their deaths Charles Engelhard, "the Platinum King," compounded the mistake of suffering a heart attack by allegedly asking for a Coke while he lay dying A bon mot is essential on one's deathbed—not "Give me a Coke."

Aristotle Onassis, who never missed an opportunity to make a buck or get his name in the papers, failed miserably at the end He was in the hospital for more than a month, full of tubes, while Jackie K O commuted from New York. Pathetic lingering, however, was not John Barrymore's style Just as the nurse adjusted the sheets on his bed, he winked and said, "Okay, hop in!" Shortly afterward he died, like a real prince

One of the bravest and noblest of them all, Anwar Sadat, died in the noblest and bravest way, taking the assassins' bullets in his chest, as a soldier should. I am sure if he had had the choice, he would not have had it otherwise I know I wouldn't.

TAKI THEODORACOPULOS is a London-based correspondent and author



BY GEOFFREY NORMAN

A BOOT FOR ALL SEASONS

You can wait a year for a pair of handcrafted Limmers. You could wait a lifetime for ones as well made



ILLUSTRATION: THOMAS WOODRUFF

PEOPLE WHO like to get out and do things are always talking about the equipment they use, comparing brand names, performance, and price. I'd say I've taken part in five thousand conversations, easily, about the relative merits of this or that shotgun, about goose down as opposed to wool, stainless versus high-carbon knives, bamboo rods over glass ones .... It's a good way to pass time, this comparing Winchester with Remington, say, and it's occasionally a means of learning something useful.

For instance. I never gave much thought to boots until two years ago. Boots went on your feet. They got wet and you dried them; they got muddy and you brushed them off. To keep them soft and waterproof you put something on them that you picked up at the store. When they wore out, you bought another pair. It was easier to get excited about a new lightweight parka than about a pair of boots, even though you never went outside without those boots.

But one day I asked a hunting partner about his boots—big, heavy, black-leather things with thick soles, more like hiking boots than hunting boots. This is a man who always has the right gear. He knows what makes something good. And he knows when you can buy the Army surplus number and when you have to go for the top of the line to get satisfaction. So I asked him about the boots.

"Limmers," he said. "Not really made for hunting, but they are the most comfortable things I have ever put on my feet. And tough. Great workmanship."

"Expensive?"

"No. That's a funny thing. You could pay more for a pair of ordinary boots made to a standard size. And you could pay two or three times as much for boots made to your feet, as these were. I got my first pair back in the Sixties. I was doing a lot of hiking and climbing then. Having trouble finding boots that I liked. Buddy of mine turned me on to these, so I went over to New Hampshire and got measured for a pair. Cost me thirty-five dollars, I think, which sounded like a hell of a lot of money for a pair of boots back then. I paid about a hundred for these, and it seemed like a bargain."

"I might have to get a pair," I said, glancing down at my shabby vulcanized boots, which looked as if they'd been oiled with something out of the crankcase.

Well. I found out that it isn't that easy. If you want Limmer boots, you will have to wait almost a year from the time you are measured for lasts until the time you first put your feet into the boots, so you should get on the waiting list early if you are on your way to Everest or Kilimanjaro or Mount McKinley. And the price will go up while you wait for your boots.

"We're charging a hundred and forty dollars for boots we are delivering right now," Francis Limmer told me last fall. "When we take new orders, we make sure the customer understands that he'll have to pay more by the time he gets his boots. We've been going up about ten dollars a year for the last three or four years. We can't help it."

When Limmer says this, you know he's sincere, that he despises inflation with the righteousness of both a New Englander and a fine craftsman, and believes that values—even monetary values—should be unchanging. His is a family business. He and his brother are the third generation to run it, and each of them has a son in the business. "Everything goes up," Limmer explained. "Not just the leather and not just the help. I've got a stitcher and finisher here that my father bought forty years ago for twelve hundred dollars. It would cost me more than nine thousand to replace the stitcher alone. So I had it rebuilt instead, and *that* cost me eighteen hundred. But just the same, we feel like we give good value. We don't borrow money and we don't advertise. And we pass those savings along to the customer."

Many, many satisfied customers, he might have added. Peter Limmer and Sons makes about eighteen to twenty pairs of boots a week there in Intervale, New Hampshire. The shop is in a no-frills barn, landscaped and tended with Yankee care. There is a small sign out front, so small that it is possible to drive right by without noticing it. When you step inside, you are in the fitting room. The shop, like the boot, is sturdy and unpretentious. The place is dark, relying largely on window light, and the air is heavy with the smells of leather and glue. Along one wall are racks and racks of lasts shaped to customers' feet, ready in the event they reorder. And they do—a good portion of Limmer's business is from repeaters.

Limmer uses chrome-tanned leather and very tight stitching. There is no plastic in these boots, only leather, and they fit as if—well, as if they were built by a craftsman, precisely for you. A pair of Limmers will last seven to ten years with proper care, Limmer says. But boot care, it seems, is a matter of some controversy.

Limmer believes that boots should be greased, not waxed. That makes him a traditionalist. "I know people disagree with me," he said. "I'm just speaking for myself, you understand, but I think a good grease, with an animal-fat base, is the best thing for leather boots. These synthetic waxes do a good job of waterproofing, but they don't penetrate unless you work them in really hard, until they get like a paste, or unless you melt them.

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"The boot we make is a walking boot, not a climbing boot in the technical sense, even though a lot of climbers use it. The leather in this boot is constantly bending back and forth, and that breaks down the fibers if they aren't lubricated. If you don't get the lubrication down past the surface of the leather, the friction is finally going to cause the leather to crack."

What about oil?

"Oil penetrates too deeply. It saturates the leather and fills the air cells. That takes away from the insulating properties of the leather and makes the boots mighty cold in the winter. It also makes them too supple. You *want* some stiffness."

There are other things to keep in mind about the care of good leather boots, Limmer said. The most important is not to put wet boots close to a fire or stove. More boots have been ruined by heat than by anything else. Just stuff some newspaper inside and dry them at room temperature. Once or twice a year, take a soft scrub brush, sponge, or rag and clean the boots well with saddle soap to remove accumulated grit, which acts like an abrasive on leather. According to Limmer, some of his boots have lasted twenty-five years when cared for properly. Of course, hard use could finish a pair in a season or two, especially if the boots are constantly wet. But Limmer boots will still last two or three times as long as the competition's.

In his time, Limmer has made a lot of boots. Most of the orders are for ordinary climbers and backpackers serious enough to want the best. But celebrated climbers also come to Limmer, and he makes boots for them too—the same boots that he'll make for you. Limmer probably doesn't remember distinguished people as much as he remembers distinguished feet. And probably the most unusual feet that he ever built boots for belonged to Willi Unsoeld, a world-class climber who had gotten a severe case of frostbite on Everest and lost all but one of his toes. He asked Limmer to make some special boots for what was left of his feet. They had to fit those knobs *and* be double-insulated.

"Those were the hardest boots that I ever worked on," Limmer remembered. "When we finished, they were almost as wide as they were long. But we finished them and sent them to Willi. He called as soon as he got them. He was all excited. He said they were the most beautiful boots that he'd ever seen. He told me he put them on just as soon as he saw them. This was in the summer. Then he went outside and put his crampons on and front pointed up a tree in his front yard. He really liked those boots."

Limmer didn't say so, but you have to think he believes that Unsoeld, who was killed three years ago in an avalanche on Mount Rainier, died with his Limmers on.

GEOFFREY NORMAN is a contributing editor of Esquire magazine

BOOKS

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

DOMESTICATING THE DRAGON LADY

A revisionist view of one of the century's most formidable women, in Wilfrid Sheed's Clare Boothe Luce

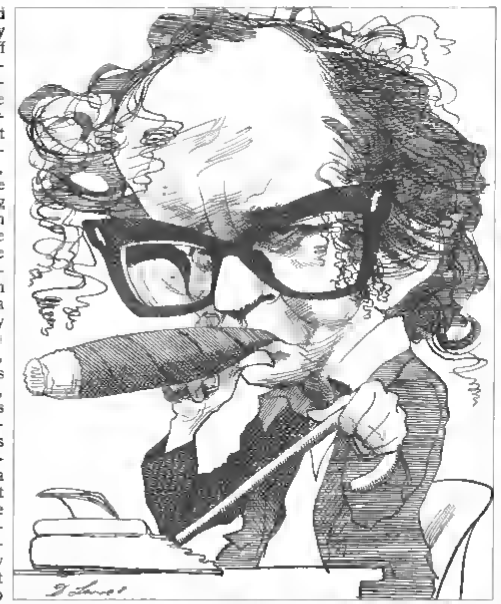


ILLUSTRATION • DAVID LEVINE

LACING UP his skates and giving his scarf a jaunty twirl, Wilfrid Sheed sets off in *Clare Boothe Luce* (Dutton, $14.50) to take a leisurely skim across the life and times of one of America's most argued-about women. Playwright, politician, diplomat, editor, wife, mother—Clare Boothe Luce has always been a revving engine of activity, and in chronicling such a career the temptation is to discharge one of those groaningly detailed books that weigh in with the heft of a brick. It's a temptation Sheed has kindly resisted. Instead of attempting a "definitive" life, he has spun out a series of spiffy divertissements, spraying the air with waves of ice shavings. In his preface, he half admits that his book is something of a noodle. "What follows is not a biography. In fact, I'm not dead sure what it is." To the uninitiated, Sheed's wryness may be somewhat off-putting—the reader may think, Well, if *he* doesn't know what he's up to, who does? But such nonchalance fits Sheed's style as snugly as weathered suede. Where another writer might make stormy noises about pioneering a new literary genre (I'm writing a . . . Neo-Nonfiction Biographical Novel!), Sheed modestly goes about his business with the self-mocking tweediness of an English prof unwinding at the lectern. *Clare Boothe Luce* is owlish and offhanded, but—and it's a big *but*—the offhandedness soon takes its toll. Asides and curlicues aren't enough to carry a book over the long haul.

Clare Boothe Luce begins with an account, unembroidered by nostalgia, of a summer Sheed spent with Clare and her husband, Henry, in Connecticut in 1949. Sheed, a weedy eighteen at the time, came to the home of Time Inc.'s founder in rather muddled circumstances: "Nobody can remember now why I was invited, sight unseen, to the Luce house in Ridgefield, Connecticut—it seemed like a colossal absence of mind on somebody's part." That's our Wilfrid: aw-shucksing his way across the patio, hoping burly gents with butterfly nets won't spring from the bushes and whisk him back to Manhattan. Clare Boothe Luce, who still could lop off the head of a rival with one brisk swish of her wit, couldn't fail to impress such a self-effacing nudnick. Sheed quite evocatively conveys her appeal, her mossy charm: "[Her] cool voice might have been designed for welcoming nervous people. She spoke slower than she had to, in a slightly facetious drawl that picked up stray bits of humor as it went along, and in later years she could slow this down even more, to the very brink of woolliness." Soothing charm is also carried in that drawl, and Clare's coquettishness opened up May/December possibilities, possibilities that went unconsummated. "One evening, she reclined on my bed in a way which was over too fast to be called an invitation by anyone short of Harpo Marx, but which suggested the possibility in a different time and circumstance, perhaps."

When not plucking the harp over What Might Have Been, Sheed sketches in the quiet bustle under the Luce roof that summer: the "steady trickle" of stiffs and bores who came to call, the dinner conversations in which Henry "would bark out his latest excitements," the evenings spent fitting together Clare's expensive jigsaw puzzles (puzzles that had been especially designed for her—"one of the pieces was always in the shape of Clare's logo, the omnipresent *CBL*") Agreeable as these anecdotes are, they don't deliver much of a wallop; history would not be the poorer had Sheed clutched his memories to his chest and kept mute. Hooking out of these reminiscences, however, is the clue to the book's purpose. Despite her reputation as a fire-snorting dragon, Clare Boothe Luce proved that summer to be a purring sugar pie. "She seemed soft and almost spectral, like an apparition, or a very understanding nun. Quiet, translucent, a very light presence. If she really was a bitch, she was playing a deep game."

Bitch. That's the key word. The driving purpose of *Clare Boothe Luce* is to acquit its subject of the charge of bitchiness—to remove the claws from Clare's portrait and bathe her features in a buttermilk glow of goodness. The most famous—and savage—account of Luce the Bitch is Helen Lawrenson's stiletto-drawn memoir "The Woman" (originally published in the August 1974 Esquire), an article Sheed uses time and time again as a wall off which he can bounce his far more benign observations. Since Sheed wasn't around to play Boswell when Clare was scribbling picture captions at *Vanity Fair* or taking in plays with George S. Kaufman, he can't claim that she was *never* the calculating witch drawn by Lawrenson, only that the woman he knew—knows—isn't the sort to go flitting about on a broomstick. Simply by slicing her own path, argues Sheed, a woman

THE DRIVING PURPOSE OF SHEED'S *CLARE BOOTHE LUCE* IS TO REMOVE THE CLAWS FROM CLARE'S PORTRAIT AND BATHE HER FEATURES IN A BUTTERMILK GLOW OF GOODNESS.

at that time risked having the label "bitch" hung from her hem! "Although there were mouth-watering fortunes to be made in America, no woman could show the slightest interest in one without becoming a bitch *and* a comic figure." So even if Clare Boothe Luce had been cloaked in innocence, she would still have heard rude whispers in the wings.

But Clare *wasn't* a sheltered maiden, she seems to have been a busy bundle of fun, and surely her stinging wit is one of the reasons she was such a snazzy companion—she knew how to blow the smoke out of a stuffy room. Even if she was as conniving as the harpies she wrote about in *The Women* that would hardly condemn her to be tied to the stake, yet Sheed keeps rallying to her defense as if she had been dragged before a tribunal. He's too solicitous of Clare Boothe Luce. He over-apologizes for her, tidying up messes most people have long since forgotten, messes Luce herself probably no longer gives a sniff about. By running a dustrag along Luce's career, Sheed domesticates her; he tames her life into a model of refinement and decorum. Although he praises the speed of Luce's wit, we seldom see any of that wit flash forth. Instead, she remains a mild pocket of radiance perched on the sofa.

Sheed is entitled to his rather laughable view of Clare Boothe Luce as the first Modern Woman, of course. He's even entitled to call that moth-eaten play *The Women* "a timeless tableau of evil." I only wish he had argued his case more succinctly. One of Sheed's strengths as a critic is that he's so deceptively casual in his delivery—he relaxes the reader with tattling chat, then zings a crisp remark on the inside corner. His critical writing in *The Morning After* and *The Good Word* has a matter-of-fact assurance, he makes reviewing look as easy as running a spoon through sherbet. But the slangy, unbuttoned approach that works so suavely in his essays looks frayed, almost shabby, in a book-length study.

The writing in *Clare Boothe Luce* lacks muscle and a lean sense of direction; it tends to dither as Sheed rummages through his chest of memorabilia and comes up with loose buttons, tattered clippings. After telling us that Luce had befriended Noel Coward, he feels obliged to add, "And Noel Coward later that very year was to sing a duet with my father, who is not publicly known for his singing, at Clare's house in Hollywood. The song was Berlin's 'Ragtime Violin,' c. 1911, and may or may not have ended with a buck and wing." Later, Sheed devotes a few paragraphs to his own job interviews at *Time* magazine, hardly a matter of the highest pertinence (particularly since Sheed admits that *Time* may have summoned him for reasons "which may have been completely unconnected with the Luces"). The book is littered with trivia and digressions, and one can't help noticing how many paragraphs in Sheed's book begin with the word *anyway*. "Anyway, *The Women* was a lucky play because . . ." "Anyway, it was plenty good enough for her purpose . . ." All those "anyways" indicate how loose and fidgety Sheed's attention is, how much he needs to keep tugging himself back to the subject.

Perhaps Sheed's attention strays because Clare Boothe Luce isn't really a figure worth extended contemplation. If Sheed had whittled his memories and feelings into an autobiographical essay, he might have had a small classic—something comparable to Gore Vidal's reminiscence of Tennessee Williams (reprinted in *Matters of Fact and of Fiction*) or Alfred Kazin's chapter on Edmund Wilson in *New York Jew*. But, of course, a compact essay doesn't win a writer handsome advances or a crack at the best-seller list (it's pertinent to note that Wilfrid Sheed is a judge for the Book of the Month Club, which is offering *Clare Boothe Luce* as an alternate selection). Amiable as Sheed's tribute to his old friend is, it's also rather toothless and bland, as if Sheed had left his shrewd instincts in a denture glass near the sink. *Clare Boothe Luce* is too timidly genteel, it gums where it should bite.

AN UNDERGROUND cult sensation in New York, **Pier Nico Solinas's *Ultimate Porno*** (Eyecontact, $15.95) is an impressionistic account of the making of the gore-drenched sleaze epic *Caligula*, which features Malcolm McDowell, Peter O'Toole, Sir John Gielgud, and a throng of panting extras. Its director was a porno slob with Cecil B. DeMille pretensions, Tinto Brass. Solinas, who served as first assistant director under Brass, records the calamities of mounting *Caligula* in a lewd, sarcastic style that recalls Terry Southern's randy comic novel *Blue Movie*. Even *Penthouse* publisher Bob Guccione, who bankrolled *Caligula*, isn't spared Solinas's withering sarcasm: "[As] Mr. Penthouse drew closer, it became embarrassingly apparent that he wasn't thirty-ish but fiftyish made up to look thirtyish. Heavily made-up. Badly made-up, as if he'd been embalmed. And that black hair of his was so lacquered it looked disembodied, like a black cat curled around the head of a statue in the late afternoon sun." Later, three *Penthouse* Pets are flown in to tart up an already humid set:

> The parking lot was awash with the last warm sun of 1976 as a Fiat 500 rolled to a stop in front of us and disgorged three young women who looked like glitterized refugees from the Pepsi Generation. The first had a low cut white tee shirt with a turtle on the front covering her two big servings of quivering jello and was wearing white jeans so tight she must have had the crotch surgically taken in. The second had an ass shaped like a mandolin, medium-sized breasts, big lips covered with enough lipstick to paint a firetruck, and platform shoes as tall as cinderblocks. The third was prettier, had long legs sticking out of a very tight, very short skirt and into orthopedic shoes, and was wearing a Choo-choo Charlie engineer's cap and a tee shirt with the words "Penthouse Power" on it. All three were covered with make-up so thick you could scrape it off with a putty knife, and smelled like a cross between lavender and roquefort cheese.

Because the Pets all talk in sync, they're dubbed Huey, Dewey, and Louie.

Despite *Ultimate Porno*'s stabs of black humor, it's a dispiriting book—the gleefulness with which Brass and his crew grind away the cast's dignity makes for ugly reading. In one lurid episode, a Neapolitan mastiff breaks loose during the shooting of a scene and sinks its teeth into an extra's forearm, "shredding it like a bloody rag"—and Brass is peeved that none of his cameramen managed to capture her real-life agony on film. Perhaps even more sickmaking than the filmmakers' rancid appetite for pornographic excess, their zeal in reducing people to meat, is the willingness of unknowns to do anything—*anything*—simply to be in a movie and win some sliver of recognition. One young woman, for example, inserts an eel into her vagina in order to have her brief brush with fame.

Significantly, the only moment of tenderness in *Ultimate Porno* is its depiction of Maria Schneider, who ankled the set (as they say in *Variety*) when she realized the X-rated direction the film was taking. No longer the voluptuous she-kitten of *Last Tango in Paris*, Schneider is wan, bony, and frightened, her allure "a John Keats eroticism of fading lights and lives." Except for that sprig of understanding, *Ultimate Porno* is all hoarse, shouting ego and battered flesh, a pornographic nightmare that the Reverend Jerry Falwell might have after supping on a badly prepared chop of mutton. It coats sex in a sour clamminess.

JAMES WOLCOTT's column appears monthly in Esquire magazine.



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